

THE *Tanner* 640
Godly Mans Ark

OR,
City of Refuge, in the day of his
DISTRESSE.

Discovered in divers SERMONS,
The first of which was Preached at the Funerall of Mistrresse Elizabeth Moore.
The other four were afterwards preached, and are all of them now made publick, for the supportation and consolation of the Saints of God in the hour of tribulation.

Herunto are annexed Mrs. Moores Evidences for Heaven, composed and collected by her in the time of her health for her comfort in the time of sickness.

By ED. CALAMY, B. D. and Pastor of the Church at Aldermanbury.

The second Edition, corrected and amended.

London, Printed for John Haccock (Brother to the late deceased Eliz. Moore) to be sold at the first shop in Paper-head Alley, next to Cornhill.

And for Tho. Parkhurst at the three Crowns over against the Great Conduit at the lower end of Cheapside, 1693.





TO
Those of Aldermanbury-Parish;
Together,
With all others who attend constantly
upon the Word of God there preach-
ed, and more especially to such of
them, who are admitted to par-
take of the Lords Supper
there administred.

Beloved in the Lord;

Need not spend much time
in giving you an account
how these ensuing Ser-
mons come to bee made
publick. It is not because they are more
worthy than those which you hear
weekly; Nay, I may truly say (without
boasting) they are less worthy (though
I think none of them much worth) than
many others. It is not because I desire to
bee in print, But it is

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1 To present you with the Pattern of a Wyoman whom God did pick out to make an example of great affliction, and great patience, that when you come into great troubles, you may bee comforted with those comforts, with which shee was comforted.

2 To acquaint you with the pains shee took, and with her diligence in time of health to make her salvation sure; That so you may bee provoked to lay up suitable, seasonable, and sufficient provision against an evil day, and not have your Evidences for Heaven to get in the hour of adversity.

It is the grand sin of most people to delay and prorogue their solemn preparation for affliction and sickness, till they come to bee sick, and in affliction. There are many in Hell, who purposed to repent, but were prevented by death; therefore Bernard saith, good purposes go to Hell, and only good performances lead into Heaven.

To prevent your delaying and deferring

Bona pro-
posita ge-
nerant
intrauit,
bona ope-
ra cœlum.

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ring, to provide for affliction, these Sermons are printed, and to perswade you, that whatsoever you do for Heaven, you would do it speedily, and with all your strength.

The Subjects handled are so plain and easy, and the stile so rude and unpolished, that I was resolved to have buried them in perpetual oblivion, had I not been conquered by this following (together with the forementioned) consideration, that they are calculated only for people under great troubles, at which times learned debates about Discipline, and controverted points of Divinity, painted Eloquence, and curious Language, are of very little esteem, and account. Afflicted consciences are oftentimes puzzled, but never comforted with doubtful disputations. Neat and elegant expressions may skin over, but cannot cure spiritual diseases. Nothing can heal a wounded conscience, and keep a man from sinking into despondency in the day of great tribulation,

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lation, but a real, right, and particular Application of the Promises, to help a doubting Christian to performe this great work, there are thirteen plaine Rules and Directions laid down in the following Treatise. My prayer is, that they may prove useful and succesful.

Seneca indeed comforts his friend Polybius, and perswades him to bear his afflictions patiently, because hee was the Emperours Favourite, and tells him, That it was not lawful for him to complaine, while Cæsar was his friend: But this was but a poor Cordial; For Cæsar himself a little while after, was so miserable, that hee had not a friend to help him, much less was hee able to help his friend. The Word of God affords a better Cordial. it bids a true Child of God not to bee over-much dejected under the greatest affliction, because hee is Gods Favourite; It tells him, That it is not lawful for him to complain while God is his friend, and the Promises of God his

Est tibi
non est de
fortuna
conqueri
salvo Cæ-
sare.

Est tibi
non est de
fortuna
conqueri
salvo Deo.
& salvis
promissio-
nibus Dei.

rich

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rich portion, and inheritance. Though Job lost all hee had, yet hee lost nothing, because hee lost not his God, who is All in All, and they who have him, have All.

My purpose at first was onely to have printed the Sermon preached at Mrs. Moors Funeral, together with her Evidences for Heaven, collected by her in the time of her health. But the importunity of friends hath overswayed mee, and caused mee to adde four more, preached immediately afterwards on the same Text.

And now (Dearly Beloved) having this fair opportunity to speak to you in writing, give mee leave to propound and lay before you some cautions and admonitions; some Rules and Directions for the right ordering of your lives and conversations in these dangerous and divided times, that so you may bee able after my decease, to have them in perpetual remembrance.

I Take heed of mistaking in the great
A 4 work

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work of Beleeving and Repenting; Faith and Repentance are the two great Gospel-graces: And the reason why so many miscarry to all eternity, is not for want of them (such as they are) but upon a pite mistake, in thinking they have them, when they have but a shadow of them. Where one goeth to Hell by desperation, hundreds go thither by presumption. O! quam multi cum hac vana fide, & vana spe ad æternos labores descendunt; How many thousands go to hell with a vain faith, and hope of heaven! And therefore bee much in examination, whether your Faith be right or no. *Examine your selves*, whether yee bee in the Faith, prove your own selves. To bee mistaken in the great work of Beleeving, is to bee necessitated to damnation. For hee that beleeves not, shall bee damned. Ask your souls often, whether your Repentance bee of a right stamp or no; whether it bee a Repentance unto life, a Repentance never to bee repented on. To bee mistaken

2 Cor. 13.

Mark. 16.

36

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in purchasing of Lands, can but hurt your outward estates, but to bee mistaken in the graces of Faith and Repentance, will undo your souls to all eternity. *What the Characters of a true Faith, and true Repentance are, you have frequently heard; I will not now repeat them. Only remember that self-flattery, is self-mockery; that soul-delusion, is soul-damnation. Pray unto God to deliver you from that great murderer of souls, the sin of Presumption.*

2 *Take heed (as I have said) of delaying, and putting off the great work of providing for Heaven, till sickness or old age. The Lord Christ commands you to seek first the Kingdome of God, and his Righteousness, &c. First, before other things, first, more than other things. You must seek after Heaven in the first and chief place, and if you seek it in the least and last place, you will never obtain it. In matters of weight delay is dangerous, Abigail*
made

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made haste to prevent Davids fury. Rahab made haste to hang out her Scarlet threed. The salvation of your souls is a matter of the greatest concernment, and to delay providing for it, is not onely a sin against the command of Christ, but a sleighting of the Heaven of Christ. How justly may God deny to you (who refuse when hee calls) either space, or grace, to turn to him, and say to you, as it is reported, hee said to a man, who desired to repent in his old age, ubi consumpsisti farinam, ibi consume fufuram, Where you have spent your flower, there go spend your branne; Therefore let my Counsel bee acceptable to you. Make Christ your unum necessarium, your one thing necessary, and Heaven your primum quærite; Seek yee first the Kingdome of God, and his Righteousness. Say with David, I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandements.

3 *Take heed of resting in the Ministry of man, You must not despise the teach-*

○Dedictory.

teachings of Orthodox Ministers lawfully called (for hee that despiseth them, despiseth Christ, hee that is above their teachings, is above the teachings of Christ, for Christ teacheth by them. ^{Eph. 3. 17} ^{2 Cor. 5. 20}

They are his Embassadors, and they preach not only in his Name, but in his stead) yet you must not rest satisfied with the teachings of men, but pray, That while the Minister speaks to your ears, God would speak to your hearts. That God would fulfil that blessed Promise, Isa. 54. 13. And all thy Children shall bee taught of God. That hee would give you an unction from the Holy One to teach you all things. ^{1 Joh. 3. 20} ^{Psal. 68. 24} That you may see the goings of God in his Sanctuary, you may behold the beauty of the Lord, and see his power and glory in his holy Temple. ^{Psal. 27. 6} ^{Psal. 63. 3} In a word, That God would give you, not onely the presence of Ordinances, but his presence in them. That you may experimentally know, what it is to enjoy communion with God in Gospel-Administrations.

4 Take

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4 Take heed of formality, customariness, and carelesnes in the performance of holy duties. Hee that serves God carelessly, brings a curse upon himself, instead of a blessing. For cursed is hee that doth the work of the Lord negligently. Hee that serves God formally and customarily doth not serve him, but mock him. If the Israelites had brought the skin of a beast for sacrifice, instead of a beast, it would have been counted a mocking of God, rather than a worshiping of him. So do they who serve God negligently and formally.

Rev. 3. 1. 5 Bee not contented to have a name to bee godly and religious, but labour to bee really such as you are supposed by others to bee. Remember what Christ saith of the Church of Sardis. That shee had a name to live, but was dead. What will it profit you to bee thought by men to bee godly, if God knows that you are ungodly? What will it advantage you to seem to go to Heaven,

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Heaven, and yet at last to miss of it? O labour to bee Christians, not only in word, but in deed, and in truth, not onely by outward profession, but by a holy conversation. Rest not satisfied with a less degree of grace, than that which will bring you to Heaven. It will bee a double Hell, to go within an inch of Heaven, and yet at last to miscarry.

6 Remember what Christ saith of Capernaum. The Capernaïtes were not so bad as the Gadarens, who desired Christ to depart from them: much less as the Nazarites, who thrust Christ out of their Coasts. For they heard him Luke 4.29 preach every Sabbath-day, and were Luke 4.32 astonished at his doctrine. And yet because they did not sincerely practise what was taught them, Christ pronounceth a heavy doom against them, Matth. 11. 23, 24. And thou Capernaum which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt bee brought down to Hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in

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in *Sodome*, it would have remained unto this day. But I say unto you, that it shall bee more tolerable for the land of *Sodome* in the day of judgement, than for thee. *It is not enough to praise the Sermons you hear, to admire, and stand astonished at the Doctrine delivered. If you do not practise what is preached. If you do not live Sermons, as well as hear them, it shall bee easier for Sodome and Gomorrha at the day of judgement than for you.*

7 Take heed that the love of the world, doth not eat out the heart of Religion, and at last, Religion it self out of your hearts. Remember what the Apostle Paul saith, That the love of money is the root of all evill, which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. And what the Apostle John saith, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love
the

1 Tim. 6.
10

1 Joh. 2. 15

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the world, the love of the Father is not in him. *There is no sin so contrary to true Saint-ship, as worldly-mindedness: A Saint is one who hath much of Heaven in him, and is much in Heaven. A Saint is one whose original is from* John 3. 3 *Heaven, hee is born from above, his name is written in Heaven, his meditations, affections, and conversation is in Heaven. Hee is one who is elected to things above, and called to partake of Heaven, and eternal happiness. And for such a man to minde things earthly, is a sin of the first magnitude. There-* Eph. 5. 3 *fore the Apostle would not have covetousness so much as named amongst Christians. There is no sin more defiles the soul, It will besmear you, and make you spiritual Blackamores, and Chimney-sweepers in Gods sight. There is no sin doth more dead and dull the heart in the doing of good duties. It* Mat. 23. 4 *binds a man both from, and in Ordinances. The Farmer; and Merchant made light of the call of Christ, and one*
went

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went to his Farm, the other to his Merchandize. There is no sin will more eclipse the light of Gods countenance from shining upon you. The Moon is never in the Eclipse, but when the earth comes between us and the Sun. A child of God is seldome without the light of Gods countenance, unless it bee through the over-much love of the world. No sin will more hinder your flight up to Heaven. The Ostrich cannot flye high, because of the shortness of her wings, Jacob was forced in his travelling towards Canaan to go slowly and softly, because of his multitude of children, of flocks and herds. And therefore let mee again beseech you to take heed of worldly-mindedness; this will quickly betray you into Apostacy from Christ, and from the truths of Christ. A man who loves the world, will (Judas-like) betray Christ for thirty peeces. Hee will part with his Religion, rather than with his estate. This sin is the root of all evil, it

Gen. 13.
13, 14

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exposeth a man to all temptations, to hurtful lusts, to all errors, and all kinde of sorrows. *It will drown your souls in perdition. Hee that seeks things below, shall have his Heaven below. The Apostle saith expressely, that they who minde earthly things, their end is damnation. Therefore let mee once again repeat it, Take heed lest you bee like the Thorny ground. Let not the cares, riches, and pleasures of the World choke the good seed that is weekly sown in your hearts.*

8 Let it bee your morning and evening thought what shall become of you to all eternity; and labour so to use things temporal, as not to lose the things that are eternal. Remember that this life is a moment upon which eternity depends, and according as you spend this moment, so you shall bee for ever happy, or for ever miserable. Remember that the pleasures of sin are but for a moment, but the punishments of sin are everlasting.

1 Tim. 6: 9.

Eccl. 2: 20.

Phil. 3: 19.

Momentum unde pendet aeternitas.

Momentum quod dicitur aeternum quod est.

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9 Look upon Sin as the greatest evils, *greater than poverty, imprisonment, banishment, or death it selfe chuse the greatest Affliction, rather than commit the least sin.* If Hell were on the one side, and Sin on the other, chuse rather to go into Hell, than to sin against God. For Sin is a greater evill than Hell, because it is the cause of Hell, and more opposite to God (who is the chiefest good) than Hell is. For God is the Author of Hell (which hee hath provided for all unbelievers, and impenitent persons.) But it is blasphemy in the highest degree, to say, That he is the Author of Sin. Look upon Christ as the greatest good, *greater than health, wealth, liberty, or life. Love Christ more than you love your estates, or lives; Hee that loves Christ more than the world, will not forsake Christ to embrace the world. Hee that fears sin more than affliction, will not sin to avoid affliction.*

10 Rest not contented with that measure

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sure of grace you have attained unto; but labour to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that the Scripture doth not only perswade you to get into Christ, but to grow up into Christ; not only to bee Righteous, but to bee filled with the fruits of Righteousness, &c. Remember that saying of Christ, To whom much is given, of them much is required. God hath given you much, you have plentiful means of salvation, and you have had them for many yeares, hee expects from you, not onely good fruit, but much good fruit; not only thirty-fold, and sixty fold, but an hundred-fold. Where the Husbandman bestows most cost, hee expects most fruit. The more a Merchant adventures by Sea, the greater return hee looks for. God hath done more for you, than for many others; and therefore hee expects that you should do some singular thing for him. Hee looks you should be more humble, more heavenly, more knowing than

*Eph 4:19.
Phil. 4:19.*

Luke 12:48.

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others. If the Sun should give no more light than a little Candle, to what purpose hath God given it so much light? If you that have Sun-like abilities do no more good, than those who have but half your abilities, to what purpose have you them? It is a true saying, As our gifts increase, so must our account increase. You shall answer at the great day, not only for your gifts, but for the measure of them. Remember that God doth not only require service from you, but service proportionable to the means, and mercies you enjoy.

Hee that hath but one Talent, shall answer but for one; but you that have five, or ten Talents, must bee answerable, according to the quantity, as well as the quality of them.

1. Labour to diffuse those graces which God hath given you, and to communicate them to those with whom you converse. True grace is of a spreading nature, and therefore compared to leaven, which diffuseth it self

Crescen-
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self into the whole lump, and to Sale,
that seasoneth all these things with which
it is mingled. Assoon as the woman of Ioh. 4.29;
Samaria had found out the Messias, shee 39.
leaves her water-pot, and goeth into the
City, to tell others what God had done
for her. Assoon as Cornelius had re-
ceived the Message from the Angel, to
send for Peter; hee calls together his
kinsmen and neer friends, that they,
together with him, might bee made
partakers of Gospel-grace. A true A.C. 10.34
Christian is like a Needle touched
with the Loadstone. A Needle (truly
touched) draweth another, and that will
draw another, and that, another: Whoso-
ever hath his heart truly touched by
effectual grace, will labour to convert
others, and they, others. Philip
will draw Nathaniel, Andrew will draw
Peter. And Peter being converted,
will labour to strengthen his Brethren
There is a natural instinct in all crea-
tures to make others like themselves
(as fire will turn all things that come

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near it, into fire) and there is a spiritual instinct in all converted Christians, to convert others. It is as natural to a true Christian to make others true Christians,, as it is for a man to beget a man. True grace is not only of a communicative, but of an assimilating nature.

See then that you labour by seasonable and religious admonitions, and exhortations; by communicating of experiences, and especially by the shining pattern of a holy life and conversation, to bring all those with whom you converse unto Jesus Christ. That man hath not grace in truth, who puts it in a dark Lanthorne.

12 Labour to bee good in your Relations, good Husbands, and good Wives, good Parents, and good Children, good Masters, and good Servants. Remember that that man cannot bee a good man, who is not good in his Relation. Hee cannot bee a good Christian, who is not a good Husband, or a good Child,

or

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or a good Father, &c. Shee cannot bee a good Christian, who is not a good Wife; and so of the rest; and the reason is: Because the same God who commands the Husband to love God, commands him to love his Wife, the same God who commands the Woman to obey God, commands her to obey her Husband. There is the same stamp of Authority upon our duties towards our Relations, as upon our duties towards God; therefore bee sure to make conscience of relative duties.

13. Joyn works of mercy and charity together with your profession of piety and holiness. For God hates a penurious, niggardly, and covetous professor of Religion. Let that saying of David abide upon your hearts, God forbid I should serve the Lord with ^{a Sam. 24.} that which cost mee nothing. God ^{24.} hates your abedience to the first Table, ^{1sa. 60. 1, 2} if it bee not joyned with obedience to the ^{11, 13, 14} second. ^{15, 16, 17} Works of mercy and charity are ^{8.} made in Scripture the touchstones of

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the truth of our piety and holiness. This is pure Religion (*saith the Apostle*) and undefiled before God, and the Father, to visit the Fatherless, and Widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. *If any*
James 1. 27. *man say* (*saith St. John*) I love God, and hateth his Brother, hee is a liar, for hee that loveth not his Brother whom hee hath seen, how can hee love God whom hee hath not seen? An unmerciful, and an uncharitable man, is a wicked and an ungodly man. Let it bee the care of all those amongst you, who are *rich in estate*, to be rich in good works. Let every man lay up for the poor, according as God hath prospered him, *remembering that saying of Christ.* Come yee blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdome prepared for you, from the foundation of the world; For I was an hungred, and yee gave mee meat, I was thirsty, and yee gave mee drink, I was a stranger, and yee took mee in, naked, and yee

1 Joh. 4. 19
1 Cor. 16. 3

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ye cloathed mee, I was sick, and yee visited mee, I was in prison, and yee came unto mee.

14 Take heed of separating from the publick Assemblies of the Saints. I have found by experience, that all our Church-calamities have sprung from this root. Hee that separates from the publick worship, is like a man tumbling down a hill, and never leaving till hee comes to the bottome of it. I could relate many sad stories of persons professing godliness, who out of dislike to our Church-meetings, began at first to separate from them, and after many changes and alterations, are turned some of them Anabaptists, some Quakers, some Ranters, some direct Atheists. But I forbear, you must hold communion with all those Churches, with which Christ holds communion; you must separate from the sins of Christians, but not from the Ordinances of Christ. Take heed of unchurching the Churches of Christ, lest you prove Schismatics in stead

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Head of being true Christians.

Mat. 6. 23.

15 *Though you never live to see the times settled, yet labour to get your consciences settled: Pray for the Spirit of Truth, to guide you into all Truth in these erring dayes. Remember that saying of Christ, If thine eye bee evil, thy whole body shall bee full of darknesse; if therefore the light that is in you bee darknesse, how great is that darknesse. God hath given you your understandings, to be the guide of the whole man. As the Eye is the guide of the body, and the Sun of the world, so is the understanding of the man; therefore you must in praying, pray that God would give you a right understanding in all things. Pray not onely for the grace of Sanctification, but of Illumination. Avoid as soul-poyson all Doctrines,*

1 *Which tend to liberty, open a door to prophaneness, and are contrary to godlines.*

2 *Which hold forth a superstitious strictness above what is required in the Word.*

3 *Which*

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3 Which are Antimagistratical, and Antiministerial.

4 Which lift up corrupt nature, and exalts unsanctified reason.

5 Which preach free-grace, to the utter ruine of good works.

6 Which lessen the priviledges of Infants, and makes their condition worse under the New Testament, than under the Old.

7 Which are contrary to the Analogy of Faith, the ten Commandements, and the Lords Prayer.

16 Take heed lest being led away with the errour of the wicked, you fall from your own stedfastness. Take 1 Pet. 3. 17 heed of a threefold Apostacy, of which this Nation is deeply guilty.

Of Apostacy

1 In your Judgements, from the Truths of Christ, and from the Faith once delivered to the Saints

2 In your Affections, from that ancient love, desire, and delight, which the Saints of God have had heretofore;
and

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and you your selves once had, in, and towards the Ordinances of Christ, and the godly and learned Ministers of Christ.

3 In your conversations, from that humble and exact walking with God in all good duties, both towards God, and man, which was the credit, and honour of the good old Puritan in former daies, Let mee speak to you in the words of the
2 Cor. 13. 65. Apostles Paul and Peter. Wherefore my beloved Brethren, bee yee stedfast and unmoveable, &c. The God of grace, who hath called you into his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you.

17 Remember that it is the will of Jesus Christ, that you who partake of the same word of life, and of the same Sacramental Bread and Wine, should admonish one another, exhort one another, watch over one another, bear the burdens of one another, provoke one another to love and good works, seek the good of one another, and not
your

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your own good only. That you should warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak. *That this is your duty appears, from Col. 3. 16. Phil. 2. 4. Heb. 1. 24. Gal. 6. 1. Rom. 15. 2. Rom. 14. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 11, 13, 14. The 12th. vers. speaks of Ministerial and authoritative admonition, but the 13, and 14. verses of fraternal and charitative. These Texts will rise up in Judgement against thousands of Christians at the last day.* I do not say that you are to admonish none but those of your own Society. Admonition is an act of mercy; *It is spiritualis Eleemosyna, spiritual Almes, and you are bound by the royal law of charity, by the communion of Saints, the communion of Churches, and communion of natures, to distribute these spiritual almes to all that need them, as God shall give occasion. But this I say, you ought especially to admonish them, and watch over them. This is novum, though not solum vinculum. Some Divines think that*

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that one chief reason why the Israelites were punished for Achans sin, was because they did not admonish him, and watch over him: For the Israelites were commanded in the plural number, Josh. 6. 18. Keep your selves from the accursed thing, &c. Hee was one of the body, and because they did not watch over him, they communicated in his sin, and in his punishment. There is an excellent Law in this Nation, That every Parish shall provide for its own poor. And by parity of reason, it is as just and equal, That every Congregation should chiefly and especially look to the souls of their own members, to warn them, admonish them, exhort them, and watch over them.

That you may the better discharge this duty, you must labour to bee acquainted one with another, as far as your Callings and Relations will give you leave. It is a great and common sin, and much to bee lamented, That there is so little knowledge and acquaintance,

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tance, between those that are of the same Congregation. They sit in the same Pew together, partake of the same Sacrament, and yet converse no more together, than if one lived at York, and the other at London. And when they do converse together, it is a meer civill and outward converse, as amongst sober heathens: But there is very little Religious society between them, for the spiritual edification one of another. Now this must needs bee a great sin; For how can you watch over one another, edifie and admonish one another? How can you support the weak, comfort the feeble-minded, if not spiritually acquainted one with another.

And yet it is not my opinion, that every member of a Congregation is bound to know every fellow-member. I beleeve it was not so in the Church of Jerusalem, or of Samaria. It is incredible, to think that they all knew one another. I should bee loath to lay such a clog upon you consciences, as to say,
That

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That every maid-servant, and than-servant is bound to know, and to bee acquainted with all those with whom they communicate in the Lords Supper. *Indeed the Church-officers are the eyes of the people, and are to know all, and to bee acquainted with all: But yet notwithstanding this, I say, It is the duty of every member, to endeavour according to his place and calling, to grow up in spiritual acquaintance one with another, as God shall offer occasion, and not to be so strange and unacquainted, but to walk in love one towards another, to bear one anothers burden, and so fulfill the Law of Christ, Gal. 6.2.*

And this you ought the rather to do, that so you may contribute to the keeping of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper pure in the Congregation to which you belong. There is much complaint amongst many (and not without just cause) of mixt communions, and of the universal liberty which some take in giving the Sacrament promiscuously

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to all that come, though grossly ignorant, and notoriously scandalous; and in making (If I may so speak) the Chancel-door, as wide as the Church-door. This in my judgement is a great iniquity.

1 It is to give holy things to Dogs, and to cast Pearls to Swine. It is a prophanation of the Ordinance, in giving it to those who are visibly unworthy to receive it, and to whom wee know Christ would not have us to give it.

2 It is an act of great uncharitableness, to those who are grossly ignorant, and scandalous. For it is to give them that which wee know will further their damnation.

3 It makes the Church-Officers who have power to hinder them, and do not use it, partakers of other mens sins.

4 It is an Act of cruelty to the Nation. For because wee have been Prodigal of Christs blood, therefore wee have been Prodigal of ours.

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5 It is a great scandal to the truly godly, and a stumbling-block to weak Christians, causing them (though unadvisedly) to separate from our Congregations.

6 It is to walk contrary to the practise of most (if not all) of the Churches of Christ in the Christian world.

To prevent this Sacrament-prophanation; there are some Ministers, who wholly surcease from administering it. This I allow not, unless in case of absolute necessity. For this is (as it were) to suspend the whole Congregation, and to deny Children their bread, for fear of giving it to Dogs. The best way is to follow the advice which our Lord Jesus Christ gives, Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17. where he propounds Rules and Directions for the removing of scandals out of the Church. If thy Brother shall trespass against thee (saith Christ) go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. Hee doth not say, Go, and separate presently (For this is to rend the Church,

not

Dedicatory.

not to heat it; *This is to hinder thy Brother from Christ, rather than to gain him to Christ. Hee doth not say, Go and tell others (for this is to back-bite thy Brother. This is to reproach him, rather than to reprove him) But hee saith, Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if hee shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother: But if hee will not heare thee, then take with thee one or two more, &c. And if hee shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church (that is, to such who are impowred by Christ to redress offences) but if hee neglect to hear the Church, let him, &c. Hence learn,*

That all Church-reformation, and Sacrament-purity must begin from Church-members, and proceed from them in Christs way unto Church-officers; That if any man who is called a Brother, bee a Fornicator, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or guilty of any other scandalous sin, It is your duty, who are

The Epistle

members of the same body with him, and know his guiltiness, to labour by private admonition to gain him to God, not to shame him by telling others, but to gain him, by telling him alone. But if hee will not hear you, then you are in an orderly way, to bring it to the Church, which if you neglect to do, the sin of Church-pollution is your sin, and not the sin of your Church-officers. If there be three doors to get into an house, hee that keeps mee out of the first, keeps mee out of the other two. All Sacrament-reformation begins with you, you are the first door at which it enters: if you faile of your duty, the sin lyeth at your door, not at ours. It is the custome of all people (though otherwise godly) if a scandalous sinner be admitted to the Lords Supper, to charge the sin of it upon the Minister, and in the mean time to forget that the sin is theirs, not his, because they have not done what Christ would have them, for the gaining of him, and for the inabling of the Church, to proceed

Dedicatory.

ceed against him by censures, if hee
prove obstinate. The Lord give you hearts
to thinke of this, and give you grace
(instead of murmuring against, and com-
plaining of mixt communions, and of
separating from us because of them) to
contribute your utmost towards the pur-
ging of our Congregations, and to pra-
ctise all those duties which Christ re-
quires of you in order thereunto.

I have much more to say of this parti-
cular, but I perceive that the Epistle swells
to too great a bigness, and therefore I shall
defer what I have further to say, till
God shall offer mee another such oppor-
tunity.

18 Labour to maintain peace and uni-
ty amongst your selves. It is a good and
pleasant thing for brethren to dwell
together in unity. Have Salt in your
selves, and peace one with another.
Labour to get your souls seasoned with
the grace of humility, self-denial, and
mortification; and this will keep you in
peace. Remember the saying of Christ,

Blessed

Plal. 133

Mark 9.50

The Epistle

1 Cor. 1.
10.

Blessed are the Peace-makers. Now I beseech you Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that yee all speak the same thing, and that there bee no divisions among you; but that yee bee perfectly joyned together in the same minde, and in the same judgement.

Descenda
in vi-
vencas, ut
non de-
scenda-
mus mo-
tientes.

19 Study often and often the quatuor novissima, the four last things, Death, Judgement, Hell, and Heaven. The meditation of Death, will prepare you for Death: The meditation of Heaven, will make you heavenly-minded: The meditation of Hell, will keep you from Hell: Therefore Bernard persuades us to go often down to Hell by meditation while wee live, and wee shall not go down to it when wee dye. The meditation of the day of Judgement, will bee both frænum, & calcar, a bridle to curb you from sin, and a spur to incite you to all godliness, that so you may give up your account with joy at that terrible day.

23 Study

Dedicatory,

20 Study the exceeding great and precious Promises of the Gospel, make a Catalogue of them, meditate on them, and labour to apply them to your own souls, for your everlasting comfort. And for this purpose, read over these Sermons, and study them in time of health, that you may enjoy the benefit of them in the time of sickness.

Lastly, Let mee intreat you to praise God in my behalfe; that hee hath been pleased out of his free love to uphold mee amongst you in my Ministerial imployment for these Eighteen years; And to continue your earnest prayers unto him, that hee would make my labours more usefull, and successful, that hee would guide mee, that I may guide you, that hee would not onely make, but keep mee faithful in these backsliding times, and teach mee so to preach, and so to live, that I may save my self, and those that hear mee.

Yours Servants in the
Work of the Ministry.
Ed. Calamy.

Books lately printed for Thomas Park-
hurst, at the sign of the three Crowns,
over against the great Conduit, at the
lower end of Cheapside.

Four profitable Treatises very use-
ful for Christian practice, viz. The
Killing Power of the Law, The Spi-
ritual Watch. The New Birth. Of
the Sabbath. By the Reverend *Willi-
am Fenner*, late Minister of *Rochford*
in *Essex*.

The Journal or Diary of a thankful
Christian, wherein is contained Direc-
tions, for the right method of keeping
and using, according to the Rules of
Practice; A Day-book of National and
publick, personal and private passages
of Gods Providence, to help Christi-
ans to thankfulness, and experience.
By *John Bendle*, Minister of the Gospel
at *Boston* in *Essex*, large Octavo.

Here followeth the Sermon preach-
ed at the Funeral of *Mrs. Elizabeth*
Moore, the 27th. of February last, at
Aldermanbury. The

The Godly mans Ark;
O R,
City of Refuge in the day
of his Distresses.

SERMON I.

PSAL. 119. 91.

*Unless thy Law had been my delights, I
should then have perished in mine
Astration.*

THis Psalm (out of which
my Text is taken) exceeds
all the other *Psalmis*, not
only in *length*, but in *excel-*
lency, so far (in the judgement
of *Ambrose*) as the light of the *Sun* excels

B

the

The Preface to the Text.

the light of the Moon. As the Book of *Psalms* is styled by *Isaiah*, An *Epitome of the Bible*, or a little Bible. So may this *Psalms* fitly bee called, *An Epitome of the Book of Psalms*. It was written (as is thought) by *David* in the dayes of his banishment under *Saul*, but so penned, that the words thereof suit the condition of all Saints. It is *penn doctrina publicum uniuersique apta & conuenientia distribuens*, A public store-house of heavenly doctrines, distributing fit, and conuenient instructions to all the people of God, and therefore should bee in no less account with those who are spiritually alive, than is the use of the *Sun*, *Air*, and *Fire*, with those who are naturally alive: It is divided into two and twenty *Sections*, according to the *Hebrew Alphabet*, and therefore fitly called *A holy Alphabet for Signs Scholars*. The *A. B. C.* of godliness: *Seneca* calls it, *An Alphabetical Poem*. The *Jews* are said to teach it their little children.

children the first thing they learn,
and therein they take a very right
course, both in regard of the heavenly
matter, and plain stile fitted for all
capacities. The chief scope of it is to
set out the glorious excellencies and
perfections of the Law of God. There
is not a verie (except one onely, say
some Learned men in Print, but are
therein deceived, but I may truly say,
Except the 112. and the 90. verses) in
this long Psalm, wherein there is not
mention made of the Law of God;
under the name of Law, or Statutes,
or Precepts, or Testimonies, or Com-
mandements, or Ordinances, or Word,
or Promises, or Wayes, or Judge-
ments, or Name, or Righteousness, or
Truth, &c.

This Text that I have cholen, sets
out the great benefit and comfort,
which David found in the Law of
God in the time of his affliction -- *It
kept him from perishing. Had not thy
Law been my delights, I had perished in
my affliction.*

The opening of the Text.

The word *Law* is taken diversly in Scripture, sometimes for the *Moral Law*, Jam. 2. 10. Sometimes for the whole *Oeconomy, Polity, and Regiment of Moses*, for the whole *Mosiacal dispensation* by Laws, partly *Moral*, partly *Judicial*, partly *Ceremonial*, Gal. 3. 23. Sometimes for the *five Books of Moses*, Luke 24. 44. Sometimes for the whole *Doctrine of God*, contained in the *Scriptures of the Old Testament*, Joh. 7. 49. By *Law* in this place is meant, all those Books of the Scripture which were written when this Psalm was penned. But I shall handle it in a larger sense, as it comprehends all the Books both of the *Old and New Testament*. For the word *Law* is sometimes also taken for the *Gospel*, as it is *Micah 4. 2. Isa. 2. 3*. The meaning then is, *Unless thy Law, that is, Thy Word, had been my delights, I should have perished in mine Affliction.*

David speaks this (saith *Musculus*) of the distressed condition hee was

in, when persecuted by *Saul*, forced to flye to the *Philistins*, and sometimes to hide himself in the rocks and caves of the earth. *Hic vero simile est, fuisse illi ad manum codicem divinae legis, &c.*

It is very likely (saith hee) that hee had the Book of Gods Law with him, by the reading of which, hee mitigated and allayed his sorrows, and kept himself pure from communicating with the Heathen in their superstitions. The *Greek Scholiasts* say, That *David* uttered these words, *A Saule pulsus, & apud Philistaeos & impios homines agere coactus*, when driven from *Saul*, and compelled to live amongst the wicked *Philistins*, &c. for he would have been allured to have communicated with them in their impieties, had he not carried about him the meditation of the word of God. *Unless thy Law had been my delights, &c.*

In the words themselves, wee have two Truths supposed, and one Truth clearly proposed.

Afflictions are the Saints portion.

1 Two Truths supposed.

1 That the dearest of Gods Saints,
are subject to many great and
tedious Afflictions.

2 That the word of God is the Saints
darling, and delights.

One Truth clearly proposed.

That the Law of God delighted in,
is the afflicted Saints Antidote a-
gainst ruine, and destruction.

1 Two Truths supposed.

The first is this:

Doct. 1. That the best of Gods Saints
are in this life subject to many great
and tedious Afflictions.

David was a man after Gods own
heart, and yet hee was a man made up
of troubles of all sorts and sizes, in-
somuch as hee professeth of himself,
Psal. 69. 1, 2, 3. *Save mee, O God, for
the waters are come in unto my soul, I sink
in deep mire where there is no standing,
I am come into deep waters, where the
floods over-flow mee: I am weary of my
crying, my throat is dried, mine eyes*

fail while I wait for my God. And in this Text he professeth that his afflictions were so great, that he must necessarily have perished under them, had hee not been sustained by the powerfull comforts he fetched out of the word. There is an emphasis in the word *Then*, I should *then* have perished; that is, long before this time; *then*, when I was afflicted, then I should have perished. *Junius* and *Tremelius* translate it, *Fam diu perissem, &c.* I should long ago have perished. *Joh* was a man eminent for godliness, and yet as eminent for afflictions. Nay *Jesus Christ* himself was a man of sorrows, *Isa. 53. 3.* Insomuch as that it is truly said, *God had one Son without sin, but no Son without sorrow.*

This our *Dear Sister*, at whose *Funeral* wee are met, was a woman full of many and great afflictions, which (no doubt) would have quite drowned and swallowed her up, had not the *Word of God* supported her, there-

Gods Design in afflicting
fore it was that hee desired that this
Text might bee the subject of her
Funeral Sermon.

*Quest. But why doth God afflict his
own children with such variety of long
and great Afflictions?*

Ans. 1. God doth not do this, be-
cause hee *hates* them, but because hee
loves them, *For whom the Lord loveth
hee chastiseth, &c.* Heb. 12. 6. Did
the Lord hate them, hee would suffer
them to go merrily to Hell. There is
no surer sign of Gods reprobating anger,
than to suffer a man to prosper in wicked
courses. God threatneth this as the
greatest punishment, not to punish them,
Hos. 4. 14. And therefore because
God loveth his children, hee chastiseth
them in this world, that they may not bee
condemned in the world to come, 1 Cor.
11. 35.

2. God doth not do this, because
hee would hurt them, but for their
good, Jer. 24. 5. The good figs were sent
into Captivity for their good. Heb.

12. 10.

19. 10. *Hee for our profit, &c.* God hath very gracious and merciful ends and aims in afflicting his people. Give mee leave here to enlarge my Discourse, and to give you an account of some of these Divine aims.

1 Gods design is to teach us to know him, and to trust in him, and to know our selves. It is a true saying of Luther, *Schola crucis, est Schola lucis*, the School of Affliction, is a School of Instruction. Gods *rod* *μαθήματα* are *μαθήματα*, His rods (when sanctified) are powerful Sermons to teach us,

1 To know God, And this is life Eternal to know him, Joh. 17. 3. It is said of Manasseh, 2 Chron. 33. 13. *Then Manasseh knew that the Lord hee was God.* Then, when hee was caught among the thorns, bound with fetters, and carried to Babylon; before that time hee knew not the Lord: Afflictions teach us to know God, not only in his power and greatness, in his anger, and hatred against sin, but also in his good-

goodness and mercy; For God doth so
 sweeten the bitter cup of affliction, that
 a childe of God doth many times taste
 more of Gods love in one months af-
 fliction, than in many years of prospe-
 rity, 2 Cor. 1. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 7. 4. Adde
 to this. Afflictions teach us to know
 God *Experimentally* and affectionative-
 ly, not *cerebraliter* (as Calvin saith) but
cordialiter, so to know him, as to love
 and fear him, and to fly unto him as our
 rock and hiding-place in the day of our
 distress. It is said, *Cant. 3. 1. By night*
I sought him whom my soul loveth, &c.
 Some by the word *Night*, understand
 the night of divine desertion, and from
 the words *Gilbertus* hath this saying,
Qui quærit in nocte, non quærit ut videat,
sed ut amplectatur; Hee that seeks after
 God in the night of adversity, doth not
 seek to see him, and know him formal-
 ly and superficially, but to imbrace
 him, and to love him really and cordi-
 ally; And therefore the Church ne-
 ver left till shee had found Christ, and
 when

when shee had found him, shee held him
and would not let him go, Cant. 3.2,
3.4.

2 Not onely to know God, but also
to trust in him, 2 Cor. 1.9. Wee had the
sentence of death in our selves, that wee
should not trust in our selves, but in God,
which raiseth the dead. Note here,

1 That an Apostle is apt in time of
prosperity, to trust in himself. 2 That
God brings his children to the gates
of death, that they might learn not to
trust in themselves, but in God, which
raiseth the dead, that is, from a dead and
desperate condition.

3 Not onely to know God, but to
know our selves, which two are the
chief parts of Christian Religion: It
is said of the Prodigal, that when hee
was in adversity, then hee came to him-
self, Luke 15.17. And when hee came
to himself. He was spiritually distracted,
when hee was in prosperity: Afflictions
teach us to know that wee are but
men, according to that of David, Psal.

Gods Design in afflicting

9.10. Put them in fear, O Lord, that they may know themselves to bee but men. Caligula and Domitian, Emperors of Rome, who in prosperity would bee called Gods, when it thundred from Heaven, were so terrified, that then they knew they were but men. In prosperity wee forget our mortality. Adversity causeth us to know, not only that wee are men, but frail men, that God hath us *between his hands* (as it is *Ezek. 21. 17.*) and can as easily crush us, as wee do moths: That wee are in *Gods hands*, as the Clay in the hands of the Potter: That hee hath an absolute sovereignty over us, and that wee depend upon him for our being, well-being, and eternal-being. These things wee know feelingly and practically in the day of Affliction. And it much concerns us to know these things, and to know them powerfully. For this will make us stand in awe of God, and study to serve and please him. Hee that depends upon a man
for

for his livelihood, knowing that hee hath him at an advantage, and can easily undo him, will certainly endeavor to comply with him, and to obtain his favour. *The ground of all service and obedience is dependence.* And did wee really and experimentally know our dependence upon God, and the advantages hee hath us at, wee could not, wee would not but comply with him, and labour above all things to gain his love and favour.

2 Gods aim in afflicting his children, is either to *keep them from sin*, or when they have sinned, to *bring them to repentance for it, and from it.*

The second Design of God in afflicting his children.

1 *To keep them from sin;* This made him send an *Angel of Satan* to buffet *Paul*, lest hee should bee lifted up in pride, and exalted above measure, 2 Cor. 12.7.

2 *When they have sinned to bring them to repentance for it, and from it.* God brings his children low, not to trample upon them, but to make them low

low in their own eyes, and to humble them for sin, Deut. 8. 2. God brings them into the deep waters, not to drown them, but to wash and cleanse them. Isa. 27. 9. By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away sin, &c. Afflictions (when sanctified) are divine Hammers, to break, and as Moses his Rod, to cleave our rocky hearts in peeces.

1 They open the eyes to see sin. *Oculos quos culpa claudit, pena aperit.* When the brethren of Joseph were in adversity then they saw (and not before) the greatness of their sin in selling their Brother, Gen. 42. 21.

They open the ear to Discipline. In prosperity wee turn a deaf ear to the voyce of the charmer, though he charm never so wisely. But adversity openeth the ear, and causeth us to attend. When God spake upon Mount Sinai in a terrible manner, then the people said unto Moses, Speak thou unto us, all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee.

thee, and wee will hear it, and do it,
 Deut. 5. 27. Memorable is that Text,
 Jer. 2. 24. A wilde Ass used to the
 Wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at
 her pleasure, in her occasion who can turn
 her away: all they that seek her, will not
 weary themselves, in her month they shall
 finde her in her month, that is, when she
 is great with young, and near her time.
 A wicked man in the day of his pro-
 perity, is like a wilde Ass used to the
 wilderness, hee snuffeth at any that
 shall reprove him, hee is of an uncir-
 cumcised ear, and a rebellious heart,
 but in his month, that is, when hee is
 bigge with Afflictions, then hee will be
 easily found, this will open his ear to
 Discipline.

3. They will open the mouth to con-
 fess sin, Judg. 10. 15.

4. They will command us to depart
 from iniquity, Job. 36. 9, 10.

Afflictions are Gods Furnaces, to purge
 out the dross of our sins, Gods files to
 pare off our spiritual rust, Gods Fannes
 to

to winnow out our chaffe. In prosperity wee gather much soil, but adversity purgeth and purifieth us. This is its proper work, to work out unrighteousness, *Dan. 11. 35. Dan. 12. 10.*

The third
Design.

3 Gods end is not only to keep us from sin, but to make us *holy and righteous*, therefore it is said, *Isa. 26. 9. When thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.* And *Heb. 12. 10.* -- *Hee for our profit, that wee may bee partakers of his holiness.* As the waters that drowned the old world, did not hurt the *Ark of Noah*, but bare it up above the earth, and as they increased, so the *Ark* was lifted up nearer and nearer to Heaven: So *afflictions* (when sanctified) do not prejudice the *Saints of God*, but lift them up nearer unto God in *holiness, and heavenly-mindedness.*

The
fourth
Design.

4 Gods design in afflicting his children, is to make the *world bitter* unto them, and *Christ sweet.* 1 To imbit-
ter the world: There are two lame leggs
upon

upon which all worldly things stand, *uncertainty, and insufficiency*. All earthly things are like the earth, founded upon nothing. They are like *heaps made of wax*, that quickly melt away. Riches, and honours, wife, and children, have *wings, and flye away*; they are like unto *Absholoms Mule*, they will fail us, when wee have most need of them; They may *puffe up* the soul, but they cannot *satisfie it, inflare possunt, satiare animam non possunt*: They are all vanity and vexation of spirit, so saith the *Preacher*; but most people in time of health, will not beleeeve these things; but when some great sickness betides them, this is as a *real Sermon*, to make out the truth of them; then they see, that a *Velvet slipper* cannot cure the *Gout*, nor a *golden cap* the *head-ache*, Prov. 13. 4. That riches avail not in the day of wrath, and this imbueth the world.

2. To make *Christ sweet and precious*. When *Christ* and his *Disciples* were in a

ship together, *Mat. 8. 25.* it is said, *That Christ was asleep*, and as long as the Sea was calm, his Disciples suffered him to sleep, but when they were ready to bee drowned, then they *awake Christ*, and said, *Master, save us, wee perish.* Even the best of Saints when fattred with outward plenty and abundance, are prone to suffer *Christ to lye asleep within them*, and so neglect the lively *actings* of Faith upon *Christ*, but when the storms of affliction, and outward calamity begin to arise, and they are ready to bee overwhelmed with distresses, then *None but Christ*, *none but Christ.*

5 Gods design in afflicting his children, is to *prove*, and *improve* their *graces.*

1 To *prove* their *graces*, *Rev. 2. 10.* *Deut. 8. 2.* to *prove* the *truth*, and the *strength* of them. 1 The *truth* and *sincerity* of their *graces*, For this cause he loaded *Job* with afflictions, to try whether hee served God for his *Camels*.

and Oxen, or for love to God. As *Solomons sword* tried the true *Mother* from the false; So the sword of affliction discovers the sincere Christian from the hypocrite. Distresses are *divine touchstones*, to try whether we be true or counterfeit Saints; That grace is true, which upon tryal is found true. 1 To try the strength of our graces. For it requires a strong faith to indure great afflictions. That Faith which will suffice for a little affliction, will not suffice for a great one. Peter had faith enough to come to *Christ* upon the Sea, but as soon as the storm began to arise, his Faith began to fail, and Christ said, *Why art thou afraid, O thou of little Faith?* Mat. 14. 30, 31. It must bee a strong Faith that must keep us from sinking in the day of great Distress.

2 To improve our graces. It is reported of the *Lionesse*, that she leaves her young ones, till they have almost killed themselves with roaring, and howling, and then at last gasp, shee re-

relieves them, and by this means they become more couragious. So God brings his children into the deeps, and suffers *Jonah* to bee three daies and three nights in the belly of the Whale, and *David* to cry till his throat was dry, *Psal.* 69. 3. and suffers his Apostles to bee all the night in a great storm till the fourth watch, and then hee comes and rebukes the winds, and by this means hee mightily increaseth their patience and dependence upon God, and their Faith in Christ. As the *Palm-tree*, the more it is depressed, the higher, stronger, and fruitfuller it grows, So doth the graces of Gods people.

Lastly, Gods aim in afflicting his people, is to put an edge upon their prayers, and all their other holy services.

1. Upon Prayer: What a famous Prayer did *Manasseh* make, when hee was under his iron fetters. It is thrice mentioned, *2 Chron.* 33. 13, 18, 19. When *Paul* was struck off his horse, and struck with blindness, then hee
prayed

prayed to purpose. Therefore it is said,
Ps. 9. 11. Behold hee prayeth ! In pro-
 sperity wee pray heavily and drowfily,
 but adverfity adds wings to our pray-
 ers, *Iſa. 26. 16.* The very heathen
 Marriners cryed aloud to God in a
 ſtorm. It is an ordinary ſaying, *Qui
 neſcit orare diſcat navigare.* There are
 no Saylorſ ſo wicked, but they will
 pray when in a great ſtorm.

2 Upon *Preaching.* Prosperity
 glutteth the ſpiritual appetite, adver-
 ſity whetteth it.

3 Upon a *Sacrament.* How ſweet is
 a Sacrament to a true Saint after a
 long and great ſickneſs ?

1 It makes God, and the word of God
 precious. If God ſets our Corn-fields
 on fire (as *Absalom* did *Foabs*) then hee
 ſhall bee ſure to cauſe us to come run-
 ning to him : And how ſweet is a text
 of Scripture to a childe of God in the
 hour of his diſtreſſe ?

By all this it appears that God afflicts
 his children not to hurt them, but to

help them, and that God hath many glorious and gracious ends and aimes in afflicting of them. Therefore it is that David saith of himself in the 71. verse of this Psalm, *It is good for mee that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes*, Hee never said, *It is good for mee that I have been in prosperity*, but hee rather saith the contrary in the 67. verse, *Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy word*. Gods people will bless God as much (if not more) in Heaven, for their adversity, than for their prosperity.

Use 1. Let us not pass rash censures upon persons under great afflictions. Say not, such a woman is a greater sinner than others, because more afflicted. This was the fault of *Jobs* friends, and God expresth his anger against them for it, *Job 42. 37. My wrath is kindled against thee, and thy two friends, for ye have not spoken the things but a right, &c.* This was the fault of the *Barbarians*,
ans,

ans, Act. 28. 4. When they saw the venomous beast hang upon the hand of Paul, they said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer, &c. But remember they were Barbarians. It is a sign of a Barbarian, not of a Christian to pass a rash censure upon persons in affliction. Think you (saith Christ) that those eighteen upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell and slew them, that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem. I tell you, nay, but except you repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luke 13. 4, 5. Think you that they which have the stone and gout in extremity, that have cancers in their faces and breasts, are greater sinners than others. I tell you nay, &c. For my part, if I would censure any, it should bee such as live wickedly, and meet with no affliction; These have the black brand of reprobation upon them. These are men designed to damnation. Ambrose would not tarry a night in the house of a Gentleman that had never in all his life

life been afflicted, for fear (as hee said) lest some great and sudden judgement should betide it. But when I see a godly woman afflicted, then I say, this is not so much for her sin, as for her trial; this is not to *hurt her*, but to *teach* her to know God, and to know her selfe, to break her heart for sin, and from sin, to make the world bitter, and Christ sweet. God hath put her into the fire of affliction, to refine her, and make her a vessel fit for his use. God is striking her with the hammer of affliction, that shee may bee squared, and made ready to bee laid in the heavenly *Jerusalem*.

Use 2. Here is *rich comfort* to the children of God, under the *greatest afflictions*. For the best of *Saints* are subject to the worst afflictions: This is the lot of all Gods children, Christ himself not excepted. *Afflictions* (indeed) considered in their own nature, are evil things, and so are called, *Amos 5. 11*. They are part of the curse due to sin, the fruit

fruit of Gods revenging wrath; they
 are as a biting and stinging Serpent. And
 to a wicked man, remaining wicked;
 they are the beginning of Hell: *un-*
sanctified afflictions parboil a wicked man
for hell and damnation. But now to a
 childe of God, they have lost both
 their *name* and *nature*, they are not *pu-*
nishments properly, but *chastisements*,
 not *tyrannical*, but *paternal*. They are
 not *satisfactory*, but *castigatory*. Jesus
 Christ hath taken away the *sting* of these
Serpents; they are not *fiery*, but *brazen*
Serpents; they have a *healing*, not a
hurling power. Christ hath removed
 the *curse*, and *bitterness* of them; as
 the wood sweetned the *waters* of *Marah*,
Exod. 15. 25. So *Christs Cross* hath
 sweetned the *bitterness* of *Afflictions*.
 There are eight comfortable consi-
 derations, to cheer the heart of a childe
 of God in the day of his distress.
 1. God never afflicts his people, but
 out of pure necessity, 1 Pet. 1. 6. *Though*
on for a season, if need bee, yee are to
traviness. As a most loving Father,
 never

never corrects his childe, but when hee is forced to it. Hee willingly provides for his childe, but punisheth him unwillingly. So God freely loadeth with his blessings, but hee never chastiseth his children, but when forced to it, therefore hee saith expressly, *Lam. 3. 33. Hee doth not afflict willingly, Isa. 27. 1. Fury is not in mee.* It is wee that put Thunderbolts in Gods hand. If the Son did not first draw up the vapours from the earth, there would never bee any thundering, or lightening. God would never thunder from Heaven with his judgements, if our sins did not first cry to Heaven for punishment. As Christ whips the sellers of Oxen and Sheep out of the Temple with a whip made (in all probability) of *their own cords*; So God never scourgeth us, but it is with a whip made of our own sins, *Prov. 3. 22. Rom. 2. 5. -- Thou treasurest up to thy self, &c.* God hath a double treasure, a treasure of mercy, and a treasure of wrath; his treasure of mercy is alwayes full,

full, but his treasure of wrath is empty, till wee fill it by our sins. And therefore when God punisheth his children, hee calls it a *strange work*, and a *strange act*, Isa. 28. 21. It is observed of the Bee, that it never stings, but when provoked: Sure I am, that God never afflicts his children, but out of pure necessity.

2 Not only out of pure necessity, but out of true and real love; as I have shewed, Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8.

Object. Do not divine afflictions proceed out of anger? Was not God angry with Moses for speaking unadvisedly with his lips? And angry with David for his Adultery, and thereupon afflicted both of them?

Ans. This anger was a Fatherly anger, rooted in love; It was not *ira quæ reprobat*, but *ira quæ purgat*: It was not *ira hostilis & exterminativa*, but *ira paterna & medicinalis*. As it is a great punishment, for God sometimes not to punish, Isaiah 1. 5. Hos. 4. 14.

So

The Afflicted Saints Cordials.

So it is a great mercy, sometimes for God to withdraw his mercy.

3 Afflictions are a part of *Divine predestination*. That God which hath elected us to *salvation*, hath also elected us unto afflictions, 1 Thes. 1. 3. That no man should be moved by these afflictions; for you your selves know that wee are appointed therunto. The same love with which God elects us, and bestoweth Christ, and his Spirit upon us, with the very same love hee afflicts us.

4 They are part of the *gracious Covenant* which God hath made with his people; Psal. 89. 31; 32; 33. In which words we have three things considerable.

1 A supposition of sin; *If his children forsake my Law, &c.* For sin is alwayes *causa sine qua non*, the cause without which God would never chastise us, and for the most part it is the cause for which.

2 Wee have a gracious promise, *Then I will visit their transgression with*

the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

3 Wee have a merciful qualification: Nevertheless my loving kindnesse will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to faile, my Covenant will I not break, &c. Afflictions are not only mercies, but Covenant-mercies; Therefore David saith, *Psal. 119. 75.* -- and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted mee. God would bee unfaithful, if hee did not afflict his children.

5 Consider that afflictions are part of the Saints blessedness, *Job. 5. 17.* Behold! happy is the man whom God correcteth, &c. Behold (saith *Eliphaz*) and wee had need behold, and consider it, for there are few that beleever it, and yet it is most true; That afflictions (when sanctified) when they are not only corrections, but instructions, then they are evidences that wee are in a blessed condition. *Eliphaz* his saying must bee interpreted by what David saith, *Psal. 94. 12.* Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest; O Lord, and teach-

teachest out of thy Law; It is not correction simply, but correction joyned with instruction, which intitles us to happiness. Job even while hee was upon the dung-hill; wonders that God should set his heart so much upon him, as to visit him every morning; and try him every moment, Job 7. 17, 18. Job upon the Dung-hill, was happier than Adam in Paradise. Adam in Paradise was conquered by the Devil; but Job upon the Dung-hill overcame the Devil. Lazarus in his Rags was happier than David in his Robes, Philpot in his Cole-house, than Bonner in his Palace; and godly Mr Whitaker upon his bed of pain, than a wicked man upon his bed of Down. There were many in Christs time who would never have known him, or come to him, had it not been for their bodily diseases.

6 Consider the gracious and merciful ends, aims, and designs, that God hath in afflicting his people, what these are, ye have heard already.

7 The *sweet and precious promises*, which hee hath made to his children in the day of their adversity, to comfort them, and support them; what these are, you shall hear afterwards.

8 Consider that all *afflictions* shall work at last for the *good of Gods children*, Rom. 8. 28. Though they are not *bona*, yet they shall bee in *bonum*; Though they are not good in themselves, yet they shall turn to their good. God beats his children, as wee do our *cloaths in the Sun*, onely to beat out the *Moths*; God puts them into the fiery furnace, not to hurt them, but onely to *untie the bands of their sins*, as hee dealt with the three children, Dan. 3. 25. God will either deliver them out of their afflictions, or send them to Heaven by them; Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Use 3. If the best of Saints are subject in this life unto many, great, and tedious afflictions, then let us,

- 1 Expect
2 Prepare for } Afflictions.
3 Improve

1 Let us expect Afflictions; for Christ hath said expressly, *Joh. 16. 33. In the world yee shall have tribulation. There is in every childe of God,*

1 *Sufficiens Fundamentum*, a sufficient Foundation for God to build a house of Correction upon: There is sin enough to deserve affliction.

2 There is *sufficiens Motivum*, Motives sufficient to prevail with God, to chastize them when they sin against him; some of these you have heard already, let mee adde one more: Because hee is more dishonoured by the sins of his own children, than by the sins of wicked men: As it is a greater discredit to an earthly Father, when his own children, than when other mens children, live wickedly; so it is a greater disparagement to our heavenly Father when his own Sons and Daughters, than when the Devils children trans-

gress his Law : And therefore God will chastize them sooner, surer, and more than others. 1 Sooner, Rom. 2. 9. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. First, the Jew, and then the Gentile. 2 Surer than others, Amos 3. 2. You onely have I known of all the Families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. 3 More than others, Lam. 4. 6. The punishment of the iniquity of the Daughter of my people, is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom. &c. Dan. 9. 12. under the whole heaven hath not been done, as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

3 There is *sufficiens necessitas*, sufficient necessity to provoke God to afflict them. It is needful that the *Wheat* bee winnowed, that so the chaffe may bee separated from it. It is needful that the *Wind* blow upon the *Wheat*, to cleanse it, and that *Gold* bee put into the furnace, to purge and purifie it.

D

When

When the *Sheep of Christ* are divided one from the other in judgement, and affections, when separated in *Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline*. It is very needful that God should send afflictions and distresses, which may bee (as the *Shepherds Dog*) very serviceable and instrumental, to unite them together, and to gather them into one *sheepfold*. And therefore let the Saints of God expect afflictions.

Gods people are to prepare for afflictions.

1 A flock of graces.

2 Let us prepare and provide against the day of tribulation. Let us provide,

1 A flock of graces. For sickness is a time to spend grace, but not to get grace. A Christian in sickness without grace, is like a souldier in war without *Armour*, like a house in stormy weather without a foundation, and like the men of the old world, when ready to bee drowned without an *Ark*. Woe bee to that person that hath his graces to get when hee should use them! And therefore if wee would bee comforted in the day

of tribulation, wee must provide afore-
hand a furniture of graces.

1 *A true Faith* (for a *painted Faith* will avail no more than a *painted helmet* or a *painted ship*) and not only a *True*, but also a *strong Faith*. A little faith will faint under great afflictions; when the winds began to blow fiercely, *Peters* little Faith began to fail, *Mat. 14. 30.*

2 *A great measure of patience* to inable us to wait quietly and contentedly, till God come in with help, for many times hee tarrieth till the fourth watch of the night, as hee did, *Matth. 14. 25.* And therefore wee have need of patience to keep us from murmuring or repining.

3 *A great stock of Self-denial, humility, repentance, contempt of the world, and heavenly-mindedness.* Hee that is furnished with grace in an evill hour, will bee as safe and secure, as *Noah* was in the Ark, in the time of the Deluge, or as those were who had sufficiency of corn in the time of the seven years

dearth in Egypt.

2 A stock
of Assu-
rance,

2 *A stock of assurance of Salvation:* For though a man hath never so much grace, yet if hee wants the assurance of it, hee cannot receive any comfort by it in the day of his distress. *Ja- cob* was not at all quieted in his spirit, for *Joseph* being alive, till hee came to know of it. And therefore wee must not onely provide grace, but the assurance of grace, that wee may bee able to say with confidence, as *Job* did upon the dung-hill, *Job* 19.29. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and with the holy Apostle, Rom. 8.38. I am perswaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall bee able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* That man who hath got a Scripture assurance of his salvation, will bee more than a Conqueror in the day of his distress.

3 A stock of Divine Experiences.

3 A stock
of Divine
Experiences.

Happy is that man that lodgeth up in his heart all the former Experiences he hath had of Gods love and mercy towards him, and knoweth how to argue from them in the day of calamity: Thus did *Moses* in his prayer to God, *Numb. 14. 19.* Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt, even untill now. Because God had forgiven them, therefore *Moses* intreats him to forgive them; this Argument is drawn from former experience. And thus *David* encourageth himself, *1 Sam. 17. 37.* The Lord hath delivered mee out of the paw of the Lion, and out of the paw of the Bear, and hee will deliver mee out of the hand of this Philistine. Thus also *Paul* reasoneth, *2 Cor. 1. 10.* Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, and in whom wee trust that hee will yet deliver us! Divine experiences are the Saints great encourage-

ments in the day of Affliction. Blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of these arrows.

4 A stock
of Ser-
mons.

4 *A stock of Sermons.* Wee must do with Sermons, as the Trades-men do with the mony they get; some of it they lay out for their present use, and some of it they lay up against the time of sickness. That man is an ill husband, and an unthrifty Trades-man that makes no provision for old age; or for an evill day; and that man is an unprofitable hearer of the word, who doth not stock and store himself with Sermons, whereby hee may be comforted in the hour of affliction. And therefore the Prophet *Isaiah* adviseth us, *Isa* 42. 23. *to hear for the time to come*, or (as it is in the Hebrew) *for the after-time*. Sermons are not onely to bee heard for our present use, but to bee laid up for after-times, that when wee lye upon our sick-beds, and cannot hear Sermons, wee may then live upon the Sermons wee have heard.

5 And

5 And lastly, Wee must prepare and provide a stock of Scripture-promises, which will bee as so many reviving cordials, to chear us, and as so many spiritual Anchors, to uphold us from perishing in the day of our tribulation. What these promises are, you shall hear afterwards: These upheld David in the hour of his distress, and therefore hee saith in the Text, *Unless thy Law had been my delight, I had perished in mine affliction.* If this our dear Sister had not had this stock, shee had been quite overwhelmed under the grievousness of her tormenting pains. Bee wise therefore, O yee Saints of God, and prepare these five provisions in the time of health, that so you may live joyfully in the time of sickness.

3 As wee must expect and provide for afflictions, so also wee must labour (when afflicted) to improve them for our spiritual benefit and advantage. Wee must pray more for the sanctification of them, than for their removal: It

5 A stock of Scripture promises.

3 Gods people are to improve afflictions.

They are to Improve Afflictions.

was not the *staffe* of *Elisba* that revived the dead childe, but *Elisba* himself. It was not the *troubling* of the waters of the Pool of *Bethesda*, that made them healing, but the coming down of the *Angel*. It was not the *Clay* and *spittle* that cured the blinde eyes, but *Christ* anointing them with it. It was not the *cloak* of *Elijah* that divided the waters, but the God of *Elijah*: Troubles, strokes, blows, afflictions, and distresses will do us no good, unless the Lord bee pleased to make them effectuell; And therefore let us pray unto God that hee would give us grace together with our affliction. That hee would adde *instruction* to his *correction*; that hee would make us *good schollars in the school of afflictions*, and inable us to take out all those excellent lessons, which hee would have us to learn in it, that thereby wee may come to know God more powerfully, and experimentally, and tok now our selves, and our own frailty, and our absolute dependenc upon God.

more

more effectually, that thereby wee may bee more purified and refined, that the wind of temptation may cleanse us from the chaffe of our corruption, that wee may learn righteousness by Gods judgments, and bee made partakers of his holiness. Such a good Scholar was *Mannasseh*, hee got more good by his *Iron chain*, than by his *Golden chain*: Such another was the *Prodigal childe*, who was happier amongst the *Swine*, than when in his *Fathers house*; Such was *Paul*, his being stricken down to the ground, raised him up to Heaven; by the *blindness* of his body, his soul received sight; and hee was turned from a persecuting *Saul*, to a persecuted *Paul*. Such another was *David*, who professeth of himself, that *it was good for him that hee was afflicted*; and such Scholars ought wee to bee.

There are some that are arrant *Dunnes* in this School, that are like unto the bush which *Moses* saw, which burned with fire, but was not consumed;
the

the fire did not consume the thorny bush. Many such *thorny* sinners are burnt up with the fire of divine afflictions, but their sins are not consumed. Of these the Prophets complain, *Amos 4.6,7,8,9,10,11,12.* -- Yet they have not returned, &c. *Jer. 5.3.* Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return. Rocks and stones by hewing and polishing may bee made fit for a building: But there are some men who by no afflictions will bee amended. The Mountains melt at the presence of the Lord, and the rocks rend asunder, when hee is angry: But there are some that have made their faces harder than the Rocks, and the Mountains, and are not at all affected with Gods anger. Of such as these Bernard complains, *Multi humiliati, pauci humiles, corripimur, sed non corripimur, plectimur, sed non flectimur; Multo facilius frangeris quam flexeris.*

They are to Improve Afflictions.

43

flexeris. Non cessant vitia civium usque ad excidia civitatum; Prius est interire quam corrigi. Prius ipsos, quam in ipsis vitia non esse.

There are others that are the worse for their afflictions, like the Smiths Anvil, the more they are stricken, the harder they are : Such a one was King Ahaz, 2 Chron. 28. 22. *In the time of his distress hee did trespass yet more against the Lord*: There is a brand put upon him--*This is that King Ahaz, that wicked King Ahaz, that reprobate King Ahaz.* As Pearls put in Vinegar lose their colour and beauty, so many, when under Gods hand, lose all their glory and excellency, and begin to distrust Gods Providence, to call his justice into question, to murmur and repine against Gods dealings, and to use unlawful means for their deliverance. Of these the Prophet *Isaiah* complains, *Isa. 1. 5. Why should you bee stricken any more? Yee will revolt more and more*; Such was *Ahaziah*, 2 King. 1. 1.

They are to Improve Afflictions.

1, 2. that sought for help from *Baalzebub the god of Ekron*; and such was *Saul*, who sought to the Witch of *Endor* for health in the day of his distress.

Both of *these* sorts are in a sad and miserable condition; For God hath *two Furnaces*, the *Furnace of Affliction*, and the *Furnace of Hell-fire*. If the first Furnace will not purge us, the second will everlastingly consume us. As the *Roman Consuls* had a man appointed to go before them, carrying a *Rod*, and an *Axe*; a *Rod* for the punishing of *corrigible offenders*, an *Axe* for the destruction of *incorrigible*; So God hath his *Rod*, and his *Axe*, his *Pruning knife*, and his *Chopping-knife*, his *Warning-peece*, and his *Murdering-peece*. Afflictions are his *Rods* to correct us for our sin, his *Pruning-knife* to pare off our luxuriant branches; his *Warning-peece* to call upon us to repent.

But if his *Warning-peece* will do

tis no good, wee must expect his *Murdering-peeeces*. If his *Pruning-knife* will not amend us, his *Chopping-knife* will confound us. If his *Roads* will not reclaim us; then his *Axe* will hew us down, and cast us into everlasting fire. God hath *three houses*, the *house of Instruction*, of *Correction*, and of *Destruction*. The place where Gods people meet to hear his word, is his *house of Instruction*. And if wee profit in this house, hee will never carry us unto the *house of Correction*. But if wee bee stubborn and rebellious in the *house of Instruction*, then hee will send us to the *house of Correction*. And if wee profit in this house, hee will never send us into the *house of Destruction*. But if wee continue incorrigible in the *house of Correction*, hee will inevitably send us to the *house of Destruction*, that is, unto hell fire.

And therefore whensoever God brings us into the School of Affliction, let us labour to bee good Schollars

in

46 They are to know the voice of the Rod.

in it; and to answer all those ends, aimes, and designes which God hath in afflicting of us. Let us pray to God that our afflictions may bee *Divine Hammers* to break our hearts for sin, and from sin, may make the world bitter, and *Christ* more precious, may prove and improve our graces, and may put an edge upon all holy duties.

There are two things I would have you in an especial manner to labour after.

Gods
people are
to labour
to know
the mean-
ing of
Gods Rod

1 Labour when afflicted, to know the meaning of Gods Rod.

2 That the good you get by afflictions, may abide upon you after your recovery from them.

I You must labour to know the meaning of Gods Rod, and what the particular errant is, which hee hath to you in the day of your distresses, you must do as *David* did, 2 Sam. 21. 1. hee inquired of the Lord to know the reason why hee sent a Famine amongst them. So must you, you must pray

as *Job* doth, *Job* 10. 2. *Shew mee, O Lord, wherefore thou contendest with mee?* When the cause of a disease is found out, it is half cured. Your great care therefore must bee to study to know the particular cause and reason, why God turns your prosperity into adversity. The Prophet *Micah* tells us, *Micah* 6. 9. That the Rod hath a voyce, and that the man of wisdom shall see Gods Name upon it. There is a great measure of spiritual Art and Wisdom required, to inable a man to hear this voyce, and to understand the language of it. A spiritual Fool cannot do it.

Quest. *What must wee do, that wee may understand the voyce of the Rod?*

Ans. You must know, that the Rod of God ordinarily speaks three languages, it is sent for correction for sin, for the trial and exercise of Grace, and for instruction in holiness; Sometimes indeed it is sent only for trial and instruction, and not at all for sin. Upon this account was *Job* afflicted, and the blinde

How wee
may know
the mean-
ing of
Gods Rod

blinde man, *Joh. 9. 3.* But for the most part it hath a *threesfold voyce*; it is appointed for *instruction*, *probation*, and also for *correction*, *Lam. 3. 39.* *Isa. 42. 24.* *Luke 1. 20.* *1 Cor. 11. 30.*

Quest. How shall a man know whether his afflictions bee only for trial and instruction, and not at all for sin?

Ans. The safest and best way for a *Christian* in this case, is to beleieve that all his afflictions are both for *trial* and *instruction*, and also for *sin*: Indeed when hee seeth another man, who is very godly, grievously diseased, hee may charitably beleieve, that this is for his *trial*, and not for his *sin*; but when it is his own case, then (as *D. Ames* saith most excellently) *Aquissimum, iustissimum, & Deo gratissimum est, ut in afflictionibus omnibus peccata nostra intueamur, quae illas vel directe procurarunt, vel saltem promeruerunt. Quamvis enim omnes afflictiones non immittantur semper directe, & precipue propter peccatum, peccatum tamen est. omnium afflictionum fons*

sons & fundamentum, Rom. 5.12. -- It is most equal, most safe, and most acceptable to God, to have an eye upon our sins, which have either directly procured them, or at least deserved them. For though afflictions are not alwayes sent directly and especially for sin, yet sin is the original and foundation of all afflictions.

Quest. What course must wee take to finde out what that sin is in particular, for which God corrects us?

Ans. 1. Sometimes wee may read our sin in our punishment. Adams becke, though a Heathen King, did this, Judg. 1.7. Threescore and ten Kings, having their thumbs, and their great Toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table, as I have done, so God hath requited mee. I read of holy Ephraim, that hee was converted by the suitableness of his affliction; unto the sin hee had committed, for hee saw clearly that his misery came not by chance, but from God immediately; and for life. As a man may sometime gather the disease

How to
finde out
the parti-
cular sin
for which
God af-
flicts us.

of the Patient by observing the Physicians Bill, so hee may guess at his sin, by considering his punishment.

2. Consider what *that sin* is for which thy *conscience* doth most of all accuse thee. Conscience is Gods Vicegerent, his *beside Preacher*. And when wee sleight the *voice* of Conscience, God seconds it with the *voice* of his *Red*, which speaks the very same language that *Conscience* doth.

3. Consider what is the *sin* of thy *Complexion*, and *Constitution*, what is thy *Dilectum delictum*, thy *peccatum in deliciis*, thy beloved sin, what is that sin to which thou art most of all inclined, and if that sin prevaile over thee, and thou canst not say with David *Psal. 18. 23. I have kept my self from mine iniquity*. It is very probable that for the subduing of that sin, thou art corrected of God.

4. If ever thou hast been at the gates of death, despairing of life, consider what *that sin* was, which did thee most

most of all trouble and perplexe thy conscience; or if ever thou hast been in a *dream*, supposing thy self to bee dying, and breathing out thy last; what was that sinne which did then most of all affright thee. It is very likely that God by afflicting thee, intends to get that sin more conquered and mortified.

5 Consider what those sins are for which thy *godly Minister* (under whose care thou livest) doth reprove thee, and of which thy *true* and *real friends* do accuse thee; for, if thou hast slighted the *voice* of thy faithful Minister, and friends, surely *God* out of his love to thee, followeth their advice with the *voice* of his Rod, that thereby hee may open thine ear to Discipline, and command thee to depart from those inquiries.

But if thou canst not finde out that *particular sin*, for which God afflicts thee, labour to repent of every sin, and then thou wilt bee sure to repent

of that sin. If thou canst not finde out the *Bee* that stings thee, pull down the *whole Hive*, or the *thorn* that pricks thee, pull down the *whole Hedge*.

Do that out of wisdom, which *Herod* did out of malice, who because hee could not finde out the *Babe Jesus*, killed all the children in *Bethlehem* from two years old, and under, that so hee might bee sure to kill *Jesus*. Let us seek the utter ruine and death of all our sins, and then wee shall bee sure to destroy that sin for which God afflicts us, and when the cause is removed, the disease will forthwith bee cured, and the Almighty pacified, and reconciled unto us.

The good we get by our Afflictions must remain with us after our recovery.

2 Let us labour that the good wee reap by our afflictions, may abide upon us after our recovery from them. There are very many who while they are under the Rod, seem to bee very penitent, and do purpose and promise to amend their lives, but as soon as the Rod is removed, they returne like the Dog

to the vomit, &c. Such was *Pharaoh*, whilst he was plagued he confessed his sin, and prayed for pardon, but as soon as ever the judgement was gone, hee hardened his heart. Such were the *Israelites*. *Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. They were not stedfast, they turned back.* Just like a truantly School-boy, who while his Master is whipping him, will promise any thing, but when it is done, forgets presently to doe what hee promised: Or like unto *water*, which while it is upon the fire is *very hot*, but as soon as ever it is taken off the fire, presently groweth cold. I knew a man who in the time of his *sickness* was so terrified in his conscience for his sins, that hee made the very bed to shake upon which hee lay, and cried out all night long, *I am damned, I am damned*, and made many and great Protestations of amendment of life, if God would bee pleased to recover him. In a little while hee did recover, and being recovered, was as bad, and as wicked as ever before.

And therefore let us labour that the good wee get by our afflictions, may not *vanish away* with our afflictions, but may *abide* on us after wee are recovered, that wee may bee able to say with *David*, *It is good for mee that I was afflicted*, not onely that I am, but that I *was*. *David* praiseth God in health, for the good hee had got in sickness, and which still *abode* with him. Let us say with the same Prophet, *Psal. 66. 13, 14. I will go into thy house with burnt offerings, I will pay thee my vows which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.* Let us pray unto God that his afflictions may not onely *skin* over our *spiritual diseases*, and *comp up* our sins, but *mortifie* them, and so *change* our natures, that wee may never return to folly.

I will conclude this point with a famous saying of *Plinius secundus*, worthy to bee written in letters of gold. A friend writes to him, and in-

intreats him to give him advice how to frame his life, so as hee might live as becomes a good man. Hee returns him this answer: I will not prescribe many rules, there is this one only which I commend to thee above all other. *Ut sales esse perseveremus sani, quales nos futuros profitemur infirmi.* Let us labour to continue and persevere to bee such, when wee are well, as wee purpose, and promise to our selves to bee, when wee are sick. There is hardly any man so wicked, but hee will in sickness make many and great promises of a new life, and of universal reformation if God would restore him. Now then if we not onely bee such, but continue to bee such when restored, as wee promise to bee when sick, then wee shall bee excellent Schollars, in the School of Affliction, and God will either (as I have already said) deliver us out of affliction, or send us to heaven by affliction. So much for the first Truth supposed.

The End of the first Sermon.

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thou off the face of the earth, and thou
shalt be a good man. For as I have
commanded and expected to be a good man
and thou art not, and thou art not
in my place to be, when thou art sick.
There is hardly any man so wicked,
but he will in his heart think many
and great promises of a new life, and
of universal reformation if God would
renew him. Now then if we not one-
word say, but want us to be such
when asked, as we promised to be
when asked, then we shall be reformed
as before, in the School of Affliction,
and God will renew (as I have already
said) deliver us out of a prison or tomb
us to heaven by affliction. So much
for the first thing proposed.

The End of the first sermon.
FINIS



THE
Word of God
IS THE
Saints Delights.

SERMON II.

PSAL. 119. 91.

*Unless thy Law had been my delights, I
should then have perished in mine
Affliction.*



Ow I come to speak of
the second Truth sup-
posed in the Text.

*That the Word of God
is the Saints darling, and
delights,*

delights, not onely their delight, but in the plural number, their delights, that is (as our annotations say) a Saint doth greatly delight in Gods Law, or as *Junius*; All the delight of a Saint is in Gods Law, Gods word is the center of his delights, *Nisi lex tu eras omnis oblectatio mea*. Many were the troubles and sorrows of *Dauids* life, but against them all hee found as many comforts and delectations in Gods Word, therefore hee saith, *Yerl. 29. Thy Testimonies are my delights, &c.* and *143. Trouble and anguish have taken hold on mee, yet thy Commandments are my delights*: And in the Text, *Unless thy Law had been my delight, &c.* Whilst others delight in vanity and iniquity, whilst others take pleasure in hunting, hawking, carding, dicing, eating, and drinking, the Saints of God, can say with *Ashtu*, *Sacra Scriptura tua sunt sancta delicia mea*, Thy holy Scriptures are my holy delight.

Reasons
why the
Saints
take so
much de-
light in
Gods Law

Quest. Why do the Saints of God take
such

such delight in the Law of God?

Ans. 1. Because they are spiritually inlightned; their eyes are opened to behold the glory and beauty, and to understand the deep mysteries of the Law, therefore David prayeth, vers. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* As the Apostle saith of the Jews, 2 Cor. 3. 14, 15, 16. *That to this day there is a vail over their hearts, when Moses is read, and when they shall turn to the Lord, this vail shall be removed.* So it is with Christians, when a wicked man reads the word, there is a vail over his eyes, and over his heart, and over the Scriptures, *The god of this world hath so blinded his eyes, that hee cannot behold the beauty and glory of them;* but the true Saint hath this vail removed, Christ hath anointed his eyes with his spiritual eye-salve; hee seeth a surpassing excellency in the Word of God, and therefore cannot but delight in it.

2 Because they are not onely *lightned*, but *regenerated*; And as children new born by the *instinct* of nature, have a natural appetite to milk for conservation of their life; so the new born Saint, by the *instinct* of grace, hath a spiritual appetite to the Word of God, according to that of Saint Peter, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new borne babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby*. The Word of God is the Saints food; and as it is impossible for a childe unborn to desire food, so for a man unregenerated to hunger after, and take true pleasure in the Word; and as it is impossible for a new born child, not to delight in Milk, so it is as impossible for a regenerate Christian, not to delight in the Law of God.

3 Because a true Saint hath the Law of God *written in his heart*, according to that precious promise of the Covenant of grace, Jer. 31. 33. *I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write*

write it in their hearts. A Saints heart is the counterpane to Gods Law. The Law is within his heart, *Psal. 40. 8.* and as it is in the Hebrew, in the midst of his bowels, *in medio viscerum.* God hath infused a principle of grace into his inward parts, whereby hee is not onely inclined, but enabled to walk in all the Commandements of the Law blameless. A true Saint hides the Law in his heart, as a choice Jewel in a most precious Cabinet, as David saith, *vers. 9. I have hid thy Law in my heart.* Hid it as a rare treasure. So doth every Saint, and therefore cannot but delight in it.

4 Because the same holy Spirit that wrote the word, dwelleth in every true Saint. It is certain that all Scripture is of Divine Inspiration, and that the holy men of God spake as they were guided by the Holy Ghost. And it is as certain, That the same Holy Ghost dwelleth in every Saint, *Rom. 8. 11.* And by vertue of the in-dwelling of the

the Spirit, they are sweetly and powerfully drawn to make the Law of God their chiefest delight.

5 Because it is *Gods inditement, and invention*. This reason is brought in the Text, *Unless thy Law, &c.* It is the Law of that God in whom they delight. It transcribes the *minde and heart* of God. A true Saint seeth the *Name, Authority, Power, Wisdom, and Goodness* of God in every letter of it, and therefore cannot but take pleasure in it. It is an Epistle sent down to him from the God of heaven. It is one of the greatest *Love-tokens* that ever God gave to his Church. There are two great Gifts that God hath given to his people. The *Word* *Christ*, and the *Word of Christ*. Both are unspeakably great. But the first will do us no good without the second.

6 A true Saint cannot but delight in the word of God, because it is his *inheritance*, *verf. 111. Thy testimonies*

have

have I taken as an heritage for ever,
for they are the rejoycing of my heart.
Therefore they were the rejoycing of
his heart, because they were his ever-
lasting Inheritance.

7 Because hee findes a *sweetest* in
it. Delight is nothing else but a pas-
sion of the soul, arising from the
sweetness of the object that wee enjoy.
Things that are good, present, suitable,
and sweet, are the object of our de-
lights, such is the word of God to e-
very true Saint. It is *sweeter than the
hony, and the hony-comb*, Psal. 19. 10.
So also Psal. 119. 103. *How sweet
thy words unto my taste, yea sweeter than
hony to my mouth.* A Saint must needs
delight in it, it is so suitable, and so
sweet.

8 Because he loves the Law. Now
that which wee love, wee cannot but
delight in, when wee come to enjoy it.
A true Saint doth not onely love the
Law, but hee loves it exceedingly,
Psal. 119. 167. *My soul hath kept thy*
testima-

testimonies, and I love them exceedingly. A true Saint can say with David, Psal. 119. 97. *Oh how do I love thy Law* and vers. 127. *I love thy Commandments above gold, yea above fine gold.* And vers. 72. *The Law of thy mouth is better to mee than thousands of gold and silver.* Now because the Saints of God are so inamoured with the Law of God; therefore it is, that they cannot but delight in it, as David saith, Psal. 119. 47. *I will delight my self in thy Commandments, which I have loved.* Hee that loves the Commandments (as all Saints do) cannot but delight in them.

Use. This shews that there are but few true Saints amongst us. There are many *bastard Saints*, and *nominal Saints*, but few true and real Saints. Wee live in an age, wherein there were never more Saints, and never fewer, never more by outward Profession, and never fewer by a holy Conversation. It is the property of a true Saint to
make

make the word of God his darling and delights.

But where shall wee finde such Saints? It is easie to finde out men that can say, *Eating and drinking is my delight; carding and dicing is my delight; reading of vain and trifling books is my delight; to satisfie the lusts of the flesh is my delight.* But where is the man that can truly say as David doth? *The Law of God is my delights, and the joy and rejoycing of my heart for ever.* Austin professeth of himselfe, that before his *Conversion*, hee took no pleasure in the Word of God. His proud heart (as hee saith) would not stoop to the humble expressions of it. After his *Conversion*, hee was ravished with the beauty and excellency of the Scriptures, but before his *Conversion*, hee saw no excellency in them. *Politian* (though a great Schollar; yet a notorious Atheist) professeth most blasphemously, that hee never lost more time than in reading the

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Scripture.

Scripture. And it is reported of *Plato*, that when hee had read the first Chapter of *Genesis*, hee said, *Hic vir multa dicit, sed nihil probat*: This man saith many things, but proveth nothing. Where shall wee finde the man that puts a due estimation upon the word of God? That prizeth it *above gold, yea above much fine gold*? That rejoiceth in thy word, as much as in all riches, verse 14. That can appeal to God, and say as *David*, vers. 159. *Consider, Oh Lord, how I love thy Precepts*? and vers. 97. *Oh how do I love thy Law*. There are some men that can delight in any thing but in God, and his Word, and his Ordinances: They can delight in the creatures of God, but cannot delight in the Ordinances of God. They can delight in the gifts of God, in riches, and health, and honours. But they cannot delight in the God of these gifts. They can delight in books of Philosophy, and Humanity, but they cannot delight in the word of God.

Mark the sad condition that these are in.

It is a certain sign that there is a *vail* over their eyes and hearts, that they are not yet *anointed* with *Christs eye-salve*, that the God of the world hath blinded their eyes, that they cannot see the glorious excellencies of the Law of God.

It is certain, that they are not *born anew*, for if they were new born babes, they would desire the sincere milk of the word.

It is certain, that the *Law of God* is not yet *written in their hearts*, and that the *Spirit of God* doth not dwell in them. It is certain, that they have no part, nor portion in the word of God, that they never tasted the sweetness that is in it, and that they have no true love to God, nor to his word. It is a true saying, *Qui regem amat, legem amat*, hee that loves a King, will love his Law. And I may say, *Qui Deum amat, legem Dei amat*: Hee that

that loves God, will love the Law of God, which is nothing else but his Image, and his Picture, his last Will and Testament, his blessed Love-token. And therefore if you delight not in the Law of God, it is evident you do not delight in the God of this Law. And if you delight not in God, hee will not delight in you; unless it bee to laugh at your destruction, as it is Prov. 1. 26.

Q. But how shall I know whether I do delight in the Word of God, or no?

Ans. You shall know it by these notes.

1. Hee that delights in Gods Law, will bee very frequent in meditating and reading of it, and very often in speaking of it. Thus saith David, Psal. 1. 2. His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and therein hee will meditate day and night. And Psalm. 119. 97. Oh how do I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day. So also vers. 15, 16. 23. Hee that takes pleasure in the Law

Law, hee will bee often thinking of it, as Christ saith, *Matth. 6. 21. Where the treasure is, there the heart will bee also.* If the word of God bee thy treasure, thou wilt meditate on it, *Cogitatione crebrâ, longâ, & profundâ.* Thou wilt frequently think of it, and when thou beginnest to think of it, thou wilt dwell upon the thought of it, as a Bee dwells (as it were) upon the flower to suck out the sweetness that is in it, and thou wilt think of it with *deep* and *serious* meditations and contemplations, thou wilt *dive* into the unsearchable riches and treasures that are in the Word. And as thou wilt meditate on it, so thou wilt bee often, and unwearisome in reading and perusing of it, and discoursing about it. A man that delights in hunting, is never weary of talking of hunting, and hee that delights in the world, of speaking about the world; and if you did delight in Gods word, you would bee very frequent, and indefatigable in discoursing of it.

2 If you delight in the *Word of God*, you would delight in the *Ministers and Ambassadors* of the Word, lawfully commissionated by Christ: For the great work of the Ministry is to expound and apply the Word, and therefore if you dis-respect the godly, learned, lawful Ministry of the Word, you take no delight in the Word.

3 They that delight in the Word, will bee at *any cost* to bring the Word to their Congregations, they will part with thousands of gold and silver, rather than with the word; *He that esteems the Word above thousands, will bee willing to part with hundreds for the Words sake.* Hee will account a famine of the Word more bitter than a famine of bread; by how much the *soul* is better than the *body*, by so much will hee bee more troubled for a *soul-famine*, than a *bodily*.

4 Hee that delights truly in the Law, will sincerely labour to *obey it*, and bee much *grieved* when it is disobeyed.

ed. 1 Hee will sincerely labour to obey it, hee will make the Word of God the man of his counsel, vers. 24. *Thy testimonies are my delight*, but how doth hee prove that? in the following words, *and my counsellors*: Hee will make the Word a *Lamp to his feet, and a light to his paths*, vers. 105. In all his undertakings, hee will inquire what God would have him to do, and hee will make Gods Word his *Compass* to sail by, and pray with *David*, vers. 35. *Make mee to go in the path of thy Commandements, for therein do I delight.*

2 Hee will bee much grieved when others transgress the Law of God, Thus *David*, vers. 53. *Horror hath taken hold upon mee, because of the wicked that forsake thy Law*, and vers. 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes because they keep not thy Law.*

And therefore you that delight in sin, you cannot bee said to delight in the Word; and you that are not pained and grieved when others sin, you are

not amongst the number of those that take pleasure in Gods Law, or in whom God takes pleasure.

Use 2. Let us make it appear that wee are *Saints in deed, and in truth*, not only *Saints in Mans*, but in *Gods Calendar*, by following the example of holy *David*, set down in the Text. Let us make the Law of God our joyes, and our delights. Let mee speak to you in the words of the Apostle, *Col. 3. 16.* *Let the Word of God dwell richly in you, &c.* not onely with you, but in you. And in the Words of Christ, *Joh. 5. 39.* *Search the Scriptures, for therein you hope to finde eternal life.* The Greek word signifieth to search, as men do under ground for treasures, or to search as men who dive under water for something that is at the bottome. Let us with *Joh 23. 12.* *Esteem the word of God above our necessary food.* Let us love it above gold, yea above fine gold. Let it bee dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver, sweeter than the honey

and the honey-comb.

You that are Gentlemen, remember what *Hierom* reports of *Nepotianus*, a young Gentleman of *Rome*, *Qui longa & assidua meditatione scripturarum, pectus suum fecerat bibliothecam Christi*, who by often and assiduous meditation of the Scriptures, made his breast the Library of Christ. Remember what is said of King *Alphonfus*, that he read over the Bible fourteen times, together with such Commentaries as those times afforded.

You that are Schollars, remember *Cranmer* and *Ridley*, the former learnt the New Testament by heart in his journey to *Rome*, the latter in *Pembroke-hall Walks* in *Cambridge*. Remember what is said of *Thomas a Kempis*, that hee found rest no where, *nisi in angulo, cum libello*, but in a corner with this book in his hand. And what is said of *Beza*, that when hee was above fourscore years old, hee could say perfectly by heart any Greek Chapter

in

*The Saints Delight in the Word
in Pauls Epistles.*

You that are women, consider what *Hierom* saith of *Paula*, *Eustochiam*, and other Ladies, who were singularly versed in the holy Scriptures.

Let all men consider that hyperbolicall speech of *Luther*, That hee would not live in *Paradise* without the Word, and with it hee could live well enough in *Hell*. This speech of *Luthers* must bee understood, *Cum gratia salis*.

Quest. May not a wicked man delight in the Word of God? Is it not said of *Herod*, *Mark* 6. 20. that hee heard *John Baptist* gladly, and of the stony ground, *Luke* 8. 13. that it received the Word with joy? Is it not said of the *Israelites* remaining wicked, that they delighted to know Gods wayes, and took delight in approaching to God, *Isa* 58. 2. and of the *Fews*, *Joh* 5. 35. that they were willing for a season to rejoyce in the Light, held forth by the preaching of *John Baptist*.

Ans.

Distinguished from the Hypocrites.

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Ans. There is a wide and vast difference between the joy and delight which a true Saint takes in Gods Word, and that which may bee found in an hypocrite.

1 The delight of a godly man, is *orderly and seasonable*. It is the consequent of conviction and humiliation; For though *Joy* bee the great work of the *Spirit*, yet it is not the first work. First, The *Spirit* by the Word convinceth and humbleth, and then comforteth; therefore Christ saith, *Mat. 5. 4.* *Blessed are those that mourn, for they shall bee comforted;* and David saith, *Psal. 126. 5.* *They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy.* But the joy of an hypocrite is *unseasonable and disorderly*. It is his first work. It is said of the stony ground, that when *they heard the word, they received it immediately with gladness,* Mark. 4. 16. It is not said, they received it *first* with sorrow, and then with gladness. Here is mention of joy without any antecedent humiliation.

tion. Nay, the Text saith expressely, *Luke 8.6. it lacked moisture*, and therefore it withered away. There are many Professors in our dayes that skip from sin, to joy at first, that all in an instant are in the *highest form* of sin, and in the *highest form* of comfort, that skip out of the *lap* of the Devil, into the *lap* of joy: These are as the stony ground. These are *wanton Christians*; They *sow* before they *plough*. They know not the bitterness of sin, and therefore in time of temptation fall away.

2 The delight that a godly man takes in the Word, is a well-rooted delight. It is rooted in an *humble, good, and honest heart*, as is said of the good ground, *Luke 8.15*. But the delight of an hypocrite is *shallow and superficial*, as his graces are sleight and formal, so are his delights. Therefore it is said of the seed that fell upon the stony ground, that it had *no root*, *Luke 8.13.* and *Matth. 13. 5. it wanted depth of earth*.

earth, and therefore when the Sun arose, it was scorched. The Apostle hints this, *Heb. 6. 4.* -- and have *tasted* the good Word of God. The delight of a wicked man in the Word, is but a *tasting, and sipping*, no *soaking*; a floating a lofe in the River of Christs blood, no diving down to the bottome. A man may taste a thing, and not like it, taste, and *like it*, and yet not come up to the price of it, as the *young man*, *Matth. 19. 22.* Hee was very desirous to enjoy eternal life, but hee would not part with his possessions for the obtaining of it. A Cook tasteth of the meat hee dresseth, but they onely that are invited eat of it.

Tasting doth not imply *habitual grace*. A man may taste that which hee never digesteth, nor concocteth. The Israelites tasted of the first fruits of the Land of *Canaan*, and yet did not enter into *Canaan*. Such is the joy of the hypocrite. It is *outward* and *superficial*; But the delight of a true Saint

The Saints Delight in the Word

Saint is inward, solid, and substantial. *Jeremy* saith, that the Word of God was the joy and rejoycing of his heart, and that hee did eat it; *Fer.* 15. 16. hee did not onely taste it, but eat it. And *Paul* saith, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inner man;* His delights had depth of earth, they were well digested and concocted.

3 It is superlative and over-topping. A godly man delighteth more in God and his Word, than in any worldly thing whatsoever. *Lord lift thou up* (saith *David*, *Psal.* 4. 6, 7.) *the light of thy countenance upon us; thou hast put gladness in my heart; more than in the time that their corn; and their wine increased.* So also *Psal.* 43. 4. -- *Unto God my exceeding joy,* *Psal.* 137. 6. *If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.* And *Psal.* 119. 72. 127. The delight of a Saint in Gods Word over-toppeth all his creature-delights, and injoyments, and for the joy hee findes in it, hee will sell all hee hath to purchase it, *Mat.* 13. 44.

But the joy of a wicked man is of an *inferiour nature*, hee rejoyceth more in *Corn, Wine, and Oyl, &c.* And when it comes into competition, hee will leave his *spiritual* and *heavenly*, rather than lose his *creature* and *carnal pleasures*. Thus *Herod* rejoyced in the word that *John Baptist* preached, but hee rejoyced more in his *Herodias*, and when it came to the trial, hee chose to behead *John Baptist*, rather than to part with *Herodias*.

The stony ground, when persecution arose, parted with all its joy, and faith, rather than it would lose its estate, or life. As a godly man *rejoyceth in worldly things*, as though hee rejoyced not, 1 Cor. 7. 30. So a wicked man *rejoyceth in spiritual things*, as though hee rejoyced not. In the old Law those *Fowls* that did both *flye* and *swimme*, were unclean: A wicked man would many times *flye aloft in spiritual delights*, but hee would also *bathe himself*, and *swimme* in carnal pleasures, and

and his heart is more affected with worldly advancement, and bodily recreations; than with heavenly, and this is a sign that hee is an *unclean Christian*, and that his delights in God; and his Word are not right; because they are not *overtopping* and *superlative*.

4 It is *powerful* and *soul-strengthening*, full of life, vigour, and activity; it will enable the soul to do and suffer any thing for God; it turns a *Prison* into a *Paradise*, it makes *Martyrdom* to be as a *bed of Roses*, it is *Armour of proof* to steel us, and make us fit to indure Afflictions, both for God; and from God; therefore *David* saith in the Text, *Unless thy Law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine Affliction*. His delight in the Law supported him from sinking. It is like oyl to the *Wheels*, like *Sails* to the *Ship*, and *wings* to the *bird*; but the delight that a wicked man hath in the Word is a *powerless*, *dead*, *fruitless*, and *strengthless* delight. It is as a *paper Helmet*, and a *painted*

painted fire, it will not support him in the hour of adversity: The persons represented by the stony ground, fell away, notwithstanding their joy, as soon as ever persecution arose for the Gospel. But the joy of a true Saint is *soul-supporting*, and *soul-upholding*. *The joy in the Lord is their strength*, Neh. 8. 10.

§ The delight that a godly man hath in the Word, is *sin-excluding*. It cannot consist with a delight in any sin; therefore David saith, *Psal. 119. 11, Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sinne against thee*. Sinne is as a *wooden window*, to shut out the true joyes of the Spirit. But now a wicked man, though hee may delight in the Word, yet hee also delights in *sinning against the Word*. Although Herod heard *John Baptist* gladly, yet hee kept his *Herodias*, and though the Israelites delighted to *know Gods wayes*, yet they did not *delight to walk in his wayes*. They were as a Nation that did righteousness, hee doth not say,
G they

they were such, but *quasi gens*, &c. *a Nation* that did righteousness. And though they *delighted to approach to God*, yet they did not delight to obey that God before whom they approached; they took pleasure in sinning against God, as well as in serving of God, *Isa. 58*. It was not a *sin-excluding joy*, and therefore it was false and counterfeit.

6 It is *grace-increasing*. The more a Saint delights in the *Word of God*, the more careful hee will bee to obey the *Will of God*, and to grow and increase in the grace of God; therefore *David* saith, *Psal. 119. 167. My soul hath kept thy testimonies, for I love them exceedingly*. And *Psal. 40. 8. I delight to doe thy Will, O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart*; because the Law was written in his heart, therefore hee delighted to doe it. Hee that delights to keep Gods Law, God will give him more grace to keep it according to that remarkable text, *Psal. 119.*

55,56. *I have remembered thy Name, O Lord, and have kept thy Law, this I had, because I have kept thy Precepts.* What had David for keeping Gods Precepts? Hee had power to keep his Law; that is, to grow and increase in keeping of it. As the Prophet, *Hos. 6.3.* speaks of the knowledge of God. *Then shall we know, if wee follow on to know the Lord,* that is, if wee industriously labour to know God, wee shall have this reward, to bee made able to know him more. So may I say of the grace of God. *Hee that delights to keep Gods Law, shall have this reward, to bee enabled to keep it more perfectly.*

A true delight in Gods Word is *Grace increasing.* Grace is the *Mother* of all true joy, *Isa. 32.17.* and joy is as the *Daughter*, and the Mother and Daughter live and dye together. True; spiritual delight, ebbs and flows as grace ebbs and flows. As the wood is to the fire, oyl to the flame, the shadow to the body, so is joy to grace.

Quantum crescit in gratiâ, tantum dilataris in fiduciâ. But now a wicked man, though hee may have a kinde of delight in Gods word, yet it is not a delight of the *right kinde*. It doth not argue that hee hath true grace in him.

An hypocrite is *all joy*, and *no grace*; a *Giant* in joy, and not so much as a *dwarf* in grace, like a *green bough* eyed to a *dead tree*. Hee is in the *highest form* of joy, and not so much as in the *lowest form* of grace.

7 The delight that a godly man hath in the word, is not onely a delight in *spiritual things*, but a *spiritual delight*, grounded upon spiritual aims and reasons. But the delight of a wicked man, though it bee in *spiritual things*, yet it is but a *natural delight*. As a godly man *spiritualizeth carnal things*, so an ungodly man *carnalizeth spiritual things*. *Austin* before his conversion, rejoyced much to hear *Ambrose* preach, but it was because of his eloquence (as hee saith) not upon a spiritual account,

count. A wicked man may follow a *Preacher*, and delight in his preaching, because of his elegant words, and Rhetorical expressions, because *hee is unto him as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voyce, &c.* as it is *Ezek. 33. 31.* Or, out of novelty, because newly come (as the Israelites delighted in Manna at first, but afterwards loathed it) or because hee loves his person; or out of a desire to obtain a form of knowledge in heavenly things. The *Pharisees* delighted to do many spiritual things out of *vain-glory*. *Jehu* delighted to do the will of God, but it was for his owne ends. *Pauci quarunt Jesum, propter Jesum.* *Stella* is of opinion, that the Devil perswaded *Herod*, to hear *John Baptist* gladly, and to reverence him, and to do many things, that so hee might hold him the faster in his possession. The Devil had him sure by one sin, and therefore hee provoked him to do some good things, that so hee might rock

him asleep in presumption, and by his good things hee might quiet his conscience, and put a fair gloss upon his incestuous practices: A man may rejoyce in spiritual things upon sinful grounds and reasons. But now a true *Saint delights in the word* upon a *spiritual account*, because it is *Gods word*, and God would have him *delight in it*, because it is his *guide to glory*, the way by which he is sanctified. It is both *concha* & *canalis*, A *Cistern* to contain the glorious *mysteries of salvation*, and a *Conduit* to convey God and grace into his soul.

In a word, hee delights in it, because it is *holy and pure*, hee can say with *David*, *Psal. 119. 140. Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.* This no wicked man can truly say.

8 The delight that a godly man takes in the word, is without any reservation or distinction. Hee delights in the whole word of God, in the commanding, and threatening word, as well as in the

the *promising* word; he beholds God, and his *wisdom*, and *goodness* in every verse, and therefore hee can say with *Hezekiah*, Isa. 39. 8. *Good is the Word of the Lord*. Hee hath the *whole Law* written in his heart, and rejoyceth in every *title of it*. But a wicked man hath his *reservations* and *distinctions*, hee may delight in the *promising* word, but hee undervalues the *commanding* word, and turneth a deaf ear to the *threatning* word. It is said of the *Jews*, that they rejoyced in the *light* of *John Baptist*; but it is not said, They rejoyced in his *heat*: Hee was a *burning*, and a *shining Light*, they rejoyced in his *shining*, but not in his *burning*. It is hardly possible for a wicked man, remaining wicked, to rejoyce in the *burning zeal*, *holiness*, and *strictness* of a *John Baptist*. But a godly man delighteth both in the *light*, and *heat* of the word.

9 It is an *abiding delight*, 2 Theff. 3. 13. *Everlasting consolation*, Joh.

16.22. Your joy *no man taketh from you*. It is as a *fixed Star*. But the delight of a wicked man in the Word, is as the *crackling of thorns* upon the fire, and as the Corn that grew on the stony ground, which quickly sprung up, and as quickly withered, *Job 27.8*. Therefore it is said of the Jews, *Joh. 5.3*. They rejoyced in his light *for a season*. In the Greek it is, *ἡὸς ἡμέρας* for an hour. A wicked mans delight in the Word, is but as a *blazing star*, which is quickly extinguished. Hee may rejoyce in the word while hee is hearing of it, but it quickly vanisheth away. Hee is like to a man that comes into a *pleasant Garden*, and is delighted with the smell of it while hee is there. But a childe of God makes a *Posie of these Flowers*, to refresh him when hee is out. Hee delights to read, and to keep the *Law of God continually, for ever and ever*, *Psal. 119.45*.

Let us (I beseech you) labour, with
all

all labour, for this *superlative, well-rooted, powerful, spiritual, sin-excluding, grace-increasing, and abiding delight*, in the whole word of God.

Quest. What must wee do that wee may bee inabled thus to make the Law of God our Delights?

Ans. 1. You must seriously study the excellency of Gods word, this made David prize it so much, and love it so much, *Psal. 19. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.* The Word of God hath God for its Author, and therefore must needs bee full of infinite wisdom and eloquence, even the wisdom, and eloquence of God. There is not a word in it, but breathes out God, and is breathed out by God. It is (as Irenaeus saith) *καὶ τὸ τοῦ πνεύματος ἀκλόινυτον*, an invariable rule of faith, an unerring and infallible guide to Heaven. It contains glorious revelations and discoveries, no where else to bee found. It hath a manifesting, convincing, soul-humbling, soul-directing, soul-converting, and soul-comforting power, and

and efficacy in it, as appears by these Scriptures, *Heb. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. 1 King. 21. 29. Psalm 119. 105. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Psalm 119. 50.* And therefore to delight in the Word, and the God that made it, is not only our *duty*, *Psa. 37. 4.* But it is recorded in Scripture as our privilege, and as the great reward that God would bestow upon those that keep holy the *Sabbath-day*, *Isa. 58. 13, 14. Then thou shalt delight thy self in the Lord.* This shall bee thy great reward.

2 You must fixedly ponder the necessity of practising this duty: For if you delight in *Gods Law*, God will delight in you. If the Law bee your beloved, you are Gods beloved; If you take no pleasure in his word, his soul will take no pleasure in you.

3 You must pray for the grace of *Illumination*. Whensoever you take the Bible in your hand to read in it, pray *Dauids prayer, Psal. 119. 18. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things*

things out of thy Law. Philosophers observe, that *Lumen est vehiculum influentia*, Light is the Chariot of influence, as it begets the flower in the field, the gold in the Mineral; so the foundation of all regeneration, is illumination. Pray that God would open your eyes that you may understand the Scriptures, as hee did to his Apostles, Luke 24. 45. That hee would take away the veil that is upon your hearts.

4 Pray that he that made you creatures, would make you new creatures, that as new-born Babes you may desire the sincere milk of the word.

5 Pray that God would fulfill that excellent promise, Jer. 31. 33. That hee would put his Law in your inward parts, and write it in your hearts, and then you cannot but heartily delight in it.

6 Pray to God to give you the same Spirit that wrote the word, to inable you to delight in it.

7 Pray

17 Pray for a *spiritual palate*, that you may not only delight in *spiritual things*, but have a *spiritual delight* in *spiritual things*. It is said of the *Lioness*, that when shee hath once tasted of the sweetness of mans flesh, shee is never satisfied till shee hath more of it. Hee that hath tasted of the good Word of God, and not onely tasted, but eaten it, and digested it into good nourishment, hee will not onely delight in it, but hee will delight in it above gold, yea above fine gold, and hee will never bee satisfied, till hee bee filled with the fulness of that *God* that made it.

The End of the second Sermon.



THE
Excellency and Usefulness
OF THE
WORD.

SERMON III.

PSAL. 119. 91.

*Unless thy Law had been my Delights, I
should then have perished in mine
Afflictions.*



Now I come to speak of the
Proposition that is clear-
ly held forth in the Text.

Doct. 3. *That the Word
of God delighted in, is the
Afflicted Saints Antidote against ruine
and,*

and destruction. Unless thy Law had been my delights, I should, &c. The Word of God is the *sick Saints salve*, the *dying Saints cordial*, a most precious medicine to keep Gods people from perishing in time of affliction: This upheld *Jacob* from sinking when his brother *Esau* came furiously marching to destroy him, *Gen. 32. 12.* And thou saidst *I will surely do thee good, &c.* The promise of God supported him. This also upheld *Josiah*, and enabled him courageously to fight the *Lords* battles, because God had said, *Hee would never leave him, nor forsake him*, *Joel. 1. 5.* *Melancthon* saith, that the *Lantgrave of Hessen* told him at *Dresda*, that it had been impossible for him to have born up under the manifold miseries of so long an imprisonment, *Nisi habuisset consolationem ex Verbo divino in corde*, but for the comforts of the Scriptures in his heart.

There are eight things may bee said (amongst many other) in commendation

tion of the Word of God.

1 It is the *Magazin* and *Store-house* of all comfort and consolation. There is no condition (but one) that a man can be in, but hee may finde soul-sup-
porting comfort for it out of the Word. Indeed if thou resolvest to go on in sin, the Word cannot comfort thee; it threatneth Hell and Damna-
tion to all such. If the *God of Heaven* can make such miserable, they shall be miserable; But excepting this one, there is no condition so miserable, but a man may fetch a Cordial out of the Word, to support him under it. Are thou as *empty* of riches, and as *full* of Diseases, as *Job* under the Old Testa-
ment, and *Lazarus* under the New Testament? are the (sins-with which thou art willing to part) many and great? Is thy Conscience exceed-
ingly wounded and disquieted? Doth the Devil roar upon thee with hide-
ous temptations? let thy condition be never so sad, the Word of God is able

to afford thee comfort under it: For it is the *Word* of that *God*, who is the *God of all consolation*. There is no kinde of true comfort, but here it is to bee had, here are *Cordials* of all sorts. Comforts under *bodily troubles*, and comforts under *soul-troubles*. There is no *Monarch* can furnish his table with such variety of delicates, as *God* hath furnished his *Word* with variety of comforts.

2 The *Word* of *God* is not only the *Magazine* of all true comfort, but the *Fountain* from whence it is derived. All the comfort that you receive by reading of good books, is fetched out of this *Book*. All the refreshings that the *Ambassadors* of *Christ* administer to you, are borrowed from this *Fountain*. As the *King of Israel* answered the woman (that cried out, saying, *Help my Lord, O King*) If the *Lord* do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? So will all the true *Ministers* of *Christ* say to any distressed soul that cries

cries out for comfort : How can wee comfort you, if the Word of God doth not comfort you? All our comforts must bee fetcht from thence.

3 It will comfort us at *such a time*, when no outward thing can comfort us. And that is, when wee are under *soul-agonies*, and when our soul sits upon our lips; ready to depart, when wee are sailing into the *Ocean of Eternity*; then, even then, the promises of the Word will comfort us : When gold and silver, Father and Mother, Friends, and Physitians are miserable comforters, then will one *promise* out of the Word fill us full of joy unspeakable, and glorious.

4 *The Comforts of the Word exceed all other Comforts*, for they are pure, and purifying, sure, and satisfying; they are soul-supporting, soul-comforting, and soul-ravishing, they are durable and everlasting. The comforts of the world are not worthy to bee named that day, in which wee speak of the

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The Excellency and Usefulness

comforts of the Word. They are not *consolationes*, but *consolatiunculae*. At best they are but *bodily*, *unsatisfying*, and *transitory*. Many times they are *sinful*, and *soul-damning*.

5 The Word of God is not onely a *Magazine*, and a *Fountain* of comfort, but also a *touchstone*, by which wee must try all our comforts whether they bee true and real, or no. All joyes, hopes, and assurances, must bee tryed by the Word, and if not rightly grounded thereupon, are false, and *soul-delusions*.

6 It is as an *Apothecaries shop*, or a *Physicians dispensatory*, out of which wee may fetch all manner of *Medicines*, to cure all the diseases of our *souls*. Art thou *spiritually lame*, *blinde*, or *dumb*? &c. The Word will open *blinde eyes*, make the *dumb* to speak, and the *lame* to walk. If *dead in sins and trespasses*, the Word, when it is the *sword of the Spirit*, will quicken thee. It is as a *corrasive* to

eat sin out of thy heart; therefore David saith, *I have hid thy Word in mine heart; that I might not sin against thee.*

7 It is a *Spiritual Armory*, out of which wee may fetch all manner of Weapons, to conquer the Devil, and his temptations, 2 *Corint.* 10. 4. It is that *little Brook*, out of which every David may fetch *five smooth stones* to destroy the Devil. These five smooth stones, are five texts of Scripture, three of these Christ took out of the brook of the Word, by which he subdued the Devil, *Mat.* 4. 4. 7, 10.

8 It is the *Sun of the Christian World*. As the Sun is the light of the *Natural World*, and without it, the World is but a Chazos, and a Dungeon full of darkness. So is the *Word of God*, the light of the *spiritual world*, without which a Christian is under an eternal night. Therefore David saith, *Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*, *Psal.* 119. 105.

What would all the World avail, if no Sun to illighten it, and what comfort would all the wealth of it afford us, if no word to instruct, and counsel us? For this is the Christians compass to sail to Heaven by, his staffe to walk withall to Heaven, his spiritual bladders to keep his soul from drowning. The Cork, to keep up the net of his soul from sinking. Afflictions are like the *lead* of the Net, which weigheth it down, but the *Word* is as the *Cork*, which keeps it up, that it sinks not. So saith *David* in the Text, *Unless thy Law had been my delights, &c.*

Vse. If the Word of God bee of such *invaluable excellency*, *absolute necessity*, and of such *admirable use*.

1 *Vse.*

1 Let us *blesse God* exceedingly for revealing his *will* unto us in the *Word*. It was a great honour, and priviledge to the *Jews*, that to them were *committed the Oracles of God*, *Rom. 3. 2.* And it is our great happiness that we have not only the same *Oracles of God* which

which they have, but an addition of the New Testament, for the clearer discoverie of the mysteries of salvation unto us. If God be to bee praised for every crumb of bread we eat, much more for giving us his *Word*, which is the bread of life, and the only food of our souls. Blessed bee God, who hath not only given us the book of the Creatures, and the book of Nature to know himself, and his will by, but also, and especially the Book of the Scriptures, whereby wee come to know those things of God, and of Christ, which neither the Book of Nature, nor of the creatures can reveal unto us.

Let us *blefs* God, not only for revealing his will in his *Word*, but for revealing it by *writing*. Before the time of *Moses*, God discovered his Will by immediate revelations from Heaven. But wee have a surer word of Prophecy, 1 Pet. i. 19. surer (to us) than a voice from Heaven; For the Devil (saith the Apostle) transforms himself into an An-

2 Cor. 11. *gel of light.* Hee hath his apparitions,
 34 and revelations, hee is Gods ape, and in
 imitation of God, he appears to his Dis-
 ciples, and makes them beleieve it is
 God that appears, and not the Devil.
 Thus hee appeared to Saul in the like-
 nesse of Samuel. And if God should
 now at this day discover his way of
 worship, and his Divine Will by Reve-
 lations, how easily would men bee de-
 ceived, and mistake Diabolical delusi-
 ons, for Divine Revelations; and there-
 fore let us blesse God for the written
 word, which is surer and safer (as to us)
 than an immediate Revelation. There are
 some that are apt to think, that if an
 Angel should come from Heaven, and
 reveal Gods Will to them, it would
 work more upon them than the writ-
 ten word; but I would have these men
 study the conference between Abra-
 ham and Dives, Luke 16. 27, 28, 29,
 30, 31. *Habent Moſen & Prophetas,*
&c. They have Moſes and the Prophets,
 if they will not profit by them, nei-
 ther

ther would they profit by any that should come out of Hell, or down from Heaven to them. For it is the same God that speaks by his *written Word*, and by a *voice from Heaven*. The difference is only in the *outward cloathing*; and therefore if Gods speaking by writing will not amend us. No more will Gods speaking by a voice. O *bless God exceedingly for the written Word*! Let us cleave close to it, and not expect any *Revelations from Heaven* of new truths, but say with the Apostle, *Gal. 1. 8, 9.*

Use 2. Let us *prize the word of God above gold, yea above fine gold*: Let us read it, diligently, reverently, praying to God to give us the *same spirit*, that wrote it, to enable us to understand it, and conscientiously to practise it. Let us make it the joy and rejoycing of our heart, and as it is in the Text; Let us make it our *Delights*, but of this I spake in the former point. The onely motive I shall now use to perswade

you to make the Word your Delight, shall bee this in the Text. Because it will keep you from perishing in the time of your greatest affliction. It will comfort you when you have most need of it (that is, under heart-sinking-afflictions, and at the hour of death) and it will comfort you when all outward comforts and creatures fail. It will bee food to strengthen your weak Faith; Physick to cure the remainders of corruptions, it will bee a Cordial to revive your drooping spirits, and fainting souls. It will make you more than Conquerors over all temptations and distresses.

Quest. But now the great Question is, *How a childe of God ought to manage and make use of the word of God, so as to make it a Conduit of support and comfort in the day of his greatest Afflictions?*

Ans. To bee able to do this, there is a great deal of spiritual wisdom and understanding required. For the word

word to many people is like *Saul's Armour* to *David*, which was so cumbersome to him, that hee could not wear it.

There are many know not how to use the Word, so as to bee comforted by it. As the woman of *Samarita* told Christ, *Joh. 4. 11. The Well is deep, and thou hast nothing to draw with.* So may I say, The word of God is a deep Well, it is a *Well of salvation*, but it is deep, *Isa. 4.* and the deeper the sweeter, but most people want *Buckets* to draw with, they want a *Spiritual Art* to fetch out of these Wells of salvation, divine supportation and consolation; and therefore to help you in this great work you must know,

That the word of God may bee divided into three parts; Into *Commandments*, *Threatnings*, and *Promises*: And though a *Christian* must not neglect the *commanding*, and *threatning word*, yet if ever hee would make the word a *Channel of Divine comfort*, hee

The word of God divided into the commanding, threatening and promising Word.

hee must study the *promising-word*, for the Promises are a Christians *Magnum Charta* for Heaven. All comfort must bee built upon a Scripture promise, else it is presumption, not true comfort. The Promises are *pabulum fidei*, & *anima fidei*, the food of faith, and the soul of faith. As faith is the life of a Christian, so the promises are the life of Faith: Faith is a dead Faith, if it hath no promise to quicken it; As the Promises are of no use without Faith to apply them, so Faith is of no use without a Promise to lay hold on. And the great reason why the people of God walk uncomfortably in their afflictions, is, because they do not chew the Promises; they are rare Cordials, but as a man cannot taste the sweetness of a Cordial, unless hee chew it, no more can wee receive any spiritual refreshment from the Promises, unless wee meditate on them. The promises are as a Mine full of rich treasure, but as Mines, unless wee digge deep into them

then, wee can never get the gold and silver hid in them: no more can wee enjoy the soul-ravishing comfort of the promises, unless we digge into them by a serious consideration of them. They are as a garden full of rare flowers, able to sweeten any condition. But because wee doe not walk in this garden, and pick out these flowers; hence it is that wee live so disconsolately and dejectedly under our afflictions. There are many rare stories declaring the comfort that some of Gods Saints have received from the promises in the day of their distresse. Mr. *Bilney* that blessed Martyr was much wounded in Conscience, by reason of the great sin hee committed, in subscribing to the Popish errors, but hee was much comforted by reading those words, *1 Tim. 1. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save sinners, of which I am the chief.* *Beza* was supported under his troubles, by the words of Christ,

John

John 10. 27, 28, 29. Mr. Bolton tells us of one, that was upheld under great affliction, and comforted from *Isa.* 26. 3. Of another, from *Isa.* 57. 15. I knew a young maid that went triumphantly to Heaven, by the refreshing shee found in that well known Text, *Matth.* 11. 28. and many that have been wonderfully cheared by reading the eighth Chapter of the *Romans*, and by that Text, *1 Joh.* 3. 14. *Wee know that wee have passed from death unto life, because wee love the Brethren.* The truth is, there is no promise, but if God be pleased to *illighten it*, and shew us our interest in it, will afford a Harvest of joy. It is with *Promises*, as it is with *Sermons*; That *Sermon* which once heard, did not at all work upon us, the same Sermon heard at another time may exceedingly affect us. And the same Text of Scripture, which sometimes doth not at all comfort us, may at another time convey much comfort to us. Two men troubled in conscience

may

may both of them read the same chapter, and hear the same Sermon, and one of them may have his troubled minde pacified, and the other continue troubled, and the reason is, because the Spirit of God makes the Word *effectual to one, and not to the other*. How often hath a distressed Saint, read *Mat. 11. 28. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Joh. 10. 27, 28. Isa. 26. 3. Isa. 57. 15. 1 Joh. 3. 14.* and found no comfort in reading of them; But if the *Spirit of God did come in*, and open his eyes to behold the *rich mercies* wrapt up in these promises, and his *interest* in them, they would fill him with comfort above expression. And therefore if ever you would make the Word of God, Gods instrument to convey support and comfort to you in the time of *soul-sinking afflictions*, you must study the promises, and pray unto God that his Spirit may *irradiate* them, and shew you the fulness of them, and your interest in them.

Quest. *How must wee improve the pro-*

promises, so as to make them spiritual bladders, to keep us from being drowned in the deep waters of Affliction?

Ans. You must doe three things.

Three things to be done by those that would improve the promises.

1 You must make a *Catalogue of the Promises.*

2 You must seriously *ponder and meditate on them.*

3 You must *apply them* to your own souls, as belonging to you in particular.

1 You must make a *Catalogue of the Promises*, you must gather them up, as they lye scattered in the Word, into a *spiritual Nose-gay*, and binde them together: You must doe as they that gather up ends of Gold and Silver, you must lose none. Every promise is as a *ray of gold*, as a *Star* in the firmament. And though there are stars of divers magnitudes, differing from one another in glory, yet every star hath its beauty and benefit: So though some Promises are more glorious than others,

others, (like the Sun, in comparison of the Moon) yet every promise hath its beauty, and lustre, and as star-light in a dark night is very comfortable; so in the dark night of affliction, every little promise will afford unspeakable comfort to a troubled soul.

To help you in making this Catalogue, give mee leave to suggest three things.

1 Bee sure to make it in time of health. Woe bee to those that have their promises to gather, when they should make use of them! *They that sleight the promises in prosperity, shall receive no comfort from them in adversity.*

2 Forget not to treasure up all those promises which God hath made to his children, in the day of their adversity. As for example, God hath promised in all our afflictions to bee with us, *Isa. 43. 2. When thou passest through the waters, I will bee with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow*

flow thee, &c. hee will bee with you to protect and direct you, to support and comfort you. *If three Saints be put into the fiery Furnace, the Son of God will make the fourth, Dan. 3. 25.*

2 God will be *afflicted* in all our afflictions, *Isa. 63. 9.* he suffers in all our sufferings, *Act. 9. 4.*

3 Hee will make our *beds in our sicknesses*, *Psal. 41. 3.* hee will condescend to the lowest office for our ease and refreshment.

4 Hee will *know our souls in adversity*, *Psal. 31. 7.* hee will know us to pittie us, and to succour, and to help us.

5 Hee will keep us from the *evil* of all afflictions, *Job 5. 19.* God hath not promised to keep his people from afflictions, but to keep them from the hurt of them. Though they are not good in themselves, yet hee will turne them to our good, *Heb. 12. 10.* *1 Cor. 11. 32.* *Jer. 24. 5.* The good Figs were carried into Captivity for their good.

good. God hath promised that all things shall worke together for our good; Rom. 8.28. not only all Ordinances, &c. but all Afflictions, &c.

6 God hath promised to lay no more upon us, than wee are able to bear, but either to give us less pain, or greater patience, 1 Cor. 10.13. And though in a little wrath hee hide his face from us for a moment, yet with everlasting kindness will he have mercy on us, &c. Isa. 54.7,8. These, and many such like Promises, will bee as so many spiritual Cordials to revive our fainting spirits, and as so many Pillars to uphold us under the greatest Affliction.

3 For the compleating of this Catalogue, you may make use of many excellent Books written for this purpose, wherein you shall have Promises of all kindes, both spiritual and temporal, gathered together: Yet let mee advise you not to rest satisfied with the Collections of others, but when you read the Bible,

Mr. Lee
on the
Promises.
Mr. Ball
Mr. Bul-
ley.

Make a Catalogue of the Promises.

and meet with a suitable promise, with which God is pleased to affect your hearts, take the pains to write it down, and one such promise of your own writing, will work more powerfully upon your souls, than many others of anothers gathering. So much for the first, viz. *Make a Catalogue of the Promises.*

The End of the third Sermon.

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 ADVERTISEMENT
 TO THE
 READER

Reader,

THis and the following Sermon contains a large Discourse about the Promises, which because it may be thought by some to be impertinent to the Text, and
 I 2 rather

rather a *Digression* from it, than an *explication* of it; I crave leave to informe thee of two things.

1 That the *Promises* are the *Principal grounds* of *Comfort* to a *Childe* of *God*, in the day of his *Adversity*. They are his chiefe *City of Refuge*, when all *Creature-comforts* faile; when hee suffers *Ship-wrack* of all humane props, these are his *Planks* upon which hee swims safe to the *shoar of Heaven*. All *Comfort* that is not founded upon a *Promise*, is *Delusion*, not true *Consolation*. And therefore a *Discourse* about them, cannot rationally bee interpreted *Eccentricall* to the *Text*.

2 That

2 That there are diverse particulars added to these Sermons, concerning the Nature, Necessity, Excellency, and Usefulness of the Promises, which were not mentioned in the preaching of them. And if any of them shall appeare to bee Heterogenial to the Text, yet if they prove serviceable to heighten thy esteeme of the Promises, and to quicken thee to a more serious and frequent Meditation on them, and Application of them. I hope thou art not at all injured; And I may justly desire, that thou wouldest not bee offended.

It is reported of Saint An-

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stin

sin (in his life written by Possidius) that by a digression (in one of his Sermons) from his Text, hee converted an Hereticke from his erroneous Opinions. If any passage in these two Sermons prove usefull to turne thee from thy sinfull Negligence, and to awaken thee to a more diligent study of the precious Promises, I shall account it a happy and blessed Digression; For herein especially consisteth the difference betweene a Religious Christian, and a Moral Man. A Moral Man will abstaine from the outward acts of sinne; But hee knowes not what it is to live upon Promises; Hee never

nor tasted any sweetnesse in a Promise. Hee lives upon Creatures, not upon Promises, and therefore when Creatures faile, his heart sinkes like a stone, and hee is at his Wits end, and Faiths end. But a Religious Christian lives upon Promises, and not upon Creatures, and therefore when Creatures faile, hee hath the Promises to live on; Hee labours to taste the sweetnesse that is in them. Hee lives upon Promises, when Providence seemes to run crosse to Promises. They are his fiery Chariot, to carry him up to Heaven. If then these ensuing Sermons, inflame thy affections with a greater love to the

Promises, and a greater care
to meditate on them, and to get
an interest in them, thou hast
cause to bless God, and to pray
for

Thy unworthy Servant

in Christ,

ED. CALAMY.

MEDI.



MEDITATE ON THE Promises.

SERMON IV.

PSAL. 119. 91.

*Unless thy Law had been my Delights, I
should then have perished in mine
Afflictions.*



HE that would improve
the *Promises*, so as to
make them *Spiritual*
Bladders, to keep him
from being *drowned* in the
deep waters of Affliction, must not only
make

make a *Catalogue* of the *Promises*, but
hee must also,

We must
not only
make a
Catalogue
of the *Pro-*
misses, but
meditate
on them.

2 Fixedly, and seriously *meditate* on
them; first, hee must *treasure up* these
Jewels in his heart; and then *unlock*
them by *meditation*; first, hee must
make his *Nose-gay*, and then smell of
it. The Word of God (as I have
said) is as a *Garden* full of excellent
Promises, as so many *choice flowers*.
And it is our duty to walk often in
this *Garden*, to gather up all the flow-
ers, that lye scattered in it, into se-
veral *Nose-gays*, to binde them toge-
ther (if I may so speake) with the
threed of Faith, and then every day to
smell of them. The *Promises* are the
Saints Legacies left them by Christ
in his last *Will and Testament*. The
Saints are called the *Heires of the*
Promises, Heb. 6. 17. And if they
would bee filled full of joy in the
day of their distresse, they must bee
frequent in reading these *Legacies*.
The *Promises* are (as it were) the
breasts

breasts of God, full of the Milk of
 grace and comfort. And it is our duty
 to bee sucking out (by meditation)
 the milke of grace and comfort con-
 tained in them. That which the Pro-
 phet saith of the Church of Christ, may
 as truly bee said of the Promises of
 Christ. Rejoyce, O yee people of God,
 and bee glad all yee that have an interest
 in the Promises; Rejoyce for joy, all
 ye that are mourners in Sion, that yee ^{Isa. 66. 10,}
 may sucke and bee satisfied with the ^{14.}
 breasts of their consolations, that yee
 may milke out, and bee delighted with
 the abundance of joy and comfort con-
 tained in them. The Promises are the
 Saints *Aqua-vita* (as one calls them)
 the Saints *Cordials*, the Saints *Planke*
 to swim to Heaven upon, the Saints
Ferry Chariot, to carry them up to
 Heaven. And the great reason why
 they walke so uncomfortably, so dis-
 consolately, and so unbelievingly, in the
 time of their tribulation, is because
 they do not smell of these *Nest-gayes*,
 they

they do not *chew* these *Cordials*, they do not read over these *Spiritual Legacies*, they do not by serious *meditation* and *consideration*, sucke out the comfort comprehended in them. For as fire will not warme us unlesse wee tarry at it, and a *Bee* cannot sucke out the honey that is in a *flower*, unless shee abide upon it; no more can any *Childe of God* receive *supportation*, and *consolation* from the Promises in the houre of temptation, unless hee seriously and solemnly ponder and meditate on them.

There is a double difference between a *presumptuous sinner*, and a *poor, humble, distressed Childe of God*.

The difference between a presumptuous sinner, and a true Childe of God in relation to the Promises.

I A *presumptuous sinner* studieth nothing but the *promising Word*: Hee sleights the *commanding*, and the *threatning Word*. The Word commands him to keep holy the Sabbath day, not to love the world, not to lust, but hee turnes a *deaf ear* to it. The Word threatneth to wound the

hairy

hairy scalp of every one that goeth on in his wickednesse, but because God is patient and long-suffering, therefore hee regards it not. But as for the Promising word, hee snatcheth at it, hee doth not truly lay hold on it, but snatcheth at it, before it belongs to him, and Spider-like, sucks the poyson of sin out of it, and makes of it a Cradle to rock himself asleep in sinfull courses. Because God hath promised, *That whensoever a Sinner turnes from his sins which hee hath committed, hee shall surely live, and not dye,* therefore hee delays, and pro-rogues his turning from sin.

But now a poor, distressed, humble Christian, fails on the contrary part; hee pores upon the commanding and threatening Word, but never ponders the promising Word. God (saith hee) commands mee to love him with all my heart and soule, to wash my heart from iniquity, to love my enemies, to cut off my right hand, and to plucke out my right eye, &c. But I cannot performe these

Three ob-
servable
things a-
bout the
Promises.

these commands, therefore surely I shall never be saved. God (saith hee) hath threatned to curse every one that continueth not in every thing that is written in his Law to do it, and therefore surely I am accursed. But hee never studies, nor ponders the promising Word, for if hee did, hee would quickly know three things for his everlasting comfort.

1 That there is nothing required by God in his Word as our duty, but God hath either promised to bestow it upon us as his gift, or the Saints have prayed to God for it as his gift. God commands us to love him, but hee hath promised to circumcise our hearts to love him, &c. Deut. 30. 6. God com-

Ezek. 18.
31.

mands us to fear him, to turn our selves from our transgressions, and to make our selves a new heart, and a new

Ezek. 36.
26.

spirit. But hee hath promised to give us a new heart, and a new spirit, to put his fear in our hearts, that wee shall

Mic 7. 19.
Rom. 6. 14.

never depart from him, and to turn us from

from our evil wayes. The Saints of God also have prayed unto God for this, as the fruit of his free mercy, *Jer. 31. 18. Lam. 5. 21.* There is nothing commanded in the *Covenant of works*, but God hath promised in the *Covenant of grace*, in some measure to work it in us, for hee hath promised to *work all our works in us*, and to *write his Law* *Isa. 56. 12.* (not one Commandement of it only, but the whole Law) *in our hearts*, and to *put it in our inward parts*, and to *cause us to walk in his wayes.* *Jer. 31. 33. Ezek. 36. 27.*

2 That God under the *Covenant of grace*, will for Christs sake accept of less than hee requires in the *Covenant of works*. Hee requires perfection of degrees, but hee will accept of perfection of parts, hee requires us to live without sin, but hee will accept of our sincere endeavours to doe it. If there bee a willing minde, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that hee hath not, *2 Cor. 8. 12.*

3 That

3 That though hee cannot in his owne person perform all that God commands, yet Iesus Christ as his Surety, and in his stead, hath fulfilled the Law for him, and that God will accept of Christs perfect, as a cover for his imperfect righteousness. That Christ hath redeemed him from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for him. That the Threatnings of the Law are Serpents without a sting, and that Christ hath taken away the power and force of them.

Did a broken-hearted, and wounded sinner ponder and meditate on these things, they would fill him full of joy and comfort. Hee would flye from the Covenant of Works, to the Covenant of Grace; from his owne unrighteousnesse, unto the righteousness of Christ; and from the commanding and threatening word, unto the promising word; hee would say, Lord! Thou commandest mee to walke in thy Statutes, and to keep thy Lawes; This I cannot do of my selfe, but thou hast

pro-

promised *to cause me to walk in thy ways,*
and to write thy Law in my heart. Lord
 give me power to doe what thou com-
 mandest, and then command what thou
 wilt.

Domine
 da quod
 jubes, &
 jube quod
 vis. Aug.

2 A presumptuous Sinner is alwayes
 studying the promising Word, to
 bolster up himself in sin, but hee ne-
 ver studies his *sins and iniquities*; to re-
 pent for them, and from them. Hee me-
 ditates on the Promises to *harden* his
 heart in sin, but not at all on his sins to
 humble himself for them, and to turne
 from them.

The se-
 cond diffe-
 rence.

But now on the contrary, A poore
 distressed Christian pores upon his *ini-
 quities and corruptions*, but never
 mindes himself of the *Promises*, and
 this makes him live so dejectedly, and
 disconsolately. A wicked man studi-
 eth his *Corruptions* too little. A dis-
 tressed Christian too much. If hee did
 study the Promises, as much as he doth
 his corruptions, hee would not walk so
 uncomfortably.

K

Where-

Wherefore if ever you would make the *Word of God* a *Conduit* of comfort in the day of your distresse; you must not only meditate on the *commanding* and *threatning word*, but on the *promising Word*. The *Commandements* and *threatnings* must drive you to the *Promises*; you must not only study your *corruptions* to *humble* you, but also the *Promises* to *comfort* you. I do not say, you must *not* study your *corruptions*, but you must joyn the study of the *Promises* together with them. If *Abraham* had minded only the *deadnesse* of *Sarahs wombe*, and of his own body, hee had never beleev'd, &c. but hee was strong in Faith, and staggered not because hee considered *his owne body now dead*, when hee was *about an hundred years old*, nor the *deadnesse of Sarahs wombe*, but was fully persuaded, that what God had promised, hee was able to performe. If *Sarah* had considered only that shee was *past age*, shee would never have beleev'd that

Rom 4.

19, 20, 21.

that shee should have a Childe, but she eyed the Promise, and judged him faithful, who had promised, and that ^{Heb. 11:11} made her beleeve. If a Saint of God looks only downwards upon the deadnesse of his heart, and meditates only upon his sins and infirmities; hee will never bee comforted in the day of his distresse. But hee must also look upwards unto the Promises, seriously ponder, and fixedly study them; which will bee as strong Pillars to support him, and keep him from falling into despair; in the hour of tribulation.

Q. what are the Meditations which we must have in reference and relation to the Promises in the day of our distress?

Ans. I will rank them into nine particulars.

1. You must meditate upon the three great truths already mentioned, The first meditation about the Promises

1. That God commands nothing as our duty, which he hath not promised; as his gift.

K 2

2 That

2 That God in the Covenant of grace, will accept of less than he requires in the Covenant of works.

3 That if we truly beleeve in Christ, God will accept of his righteousness, as a satisfaction for our unrighteousness.

The second Meditation, meditate on the preciousness of the Promises.

2 Pet. 1. 4
The Promises are precious in five respects.
2 Cor. 1. 20.

2 You must meditate upon the excellency and preciousness of the Promises; they are called τιμὰ καὶ μέγιστα ἐπαγγελία, exceeding great and precious Promises; They are precious in five respects.

1 Because they cost a great price, (even the blood of Christ) to purchase them. They are all made to us in Christ, and for Christ; they are in him yea, and in him Amen. The Covenant (which is the Pandecta and Cabinet of all the Promises) was sealed with his Blood.

2 Because they assure us of great and precious things; they assure us of our interest in God, of our justification, reconciliation, adoption, sanctification,

and glorification. Heaven it self is nothing else but the *injoyment of the Promises*, Heb. 6. 12. The Promises are Heaven folded up; Heaven is the Promise unfolded. For the Promises are nothing else but the eternal purposes of God towards his Children made manifest. The purposes of God are his concealed Promises; and the Promises are his revealed purposes. The Promises are the kisses of Jesus Christ, they discover his dear love, and when hee discovers to us our interest in them, then hee kisses us with the kisses of his mouth, and fills us with joy unspeakable and glorious. They are made by God, and they make over God to us, as our portion, and Christ as our Saviour, and the Spirit as our Sanctifier, and all good things, both here and hereafter as our inheritance, and therefore may well bee called exceeding great and precious Promises.

3 Because they put a price upon the New Testament; for wherein doth

the New Testament exceed the old, unless it be in this, because it is founded upon better Promises: Heb. 8. 6. and bringeth in a better hope, Hebrews 7. 19.

4. Because they put a price upon all the blessings of God. A little mercy reached out to us, as a fruit of a Promise, is more worth than a world of blessings coming to us meerly by way of providence. A man may receive blessings from God upon a double account, either *ex largitate*, or *ex promisso*, either by way of providence; or by way of Promise. 1. By way of Providence, Thus God gives the earth to the sons of men, Psal. 115. 16. Thus hee gave one hundred twenty and seven Provinces to *Abashnervus*. Thus he sets up the basest of men to rule over Nations, Dan. 4. 17.

2. By way of Promise. Thus hee gives health, wealth, and all outward comforts unto his children. For godliness hath the Promise of this life, and that

that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. Now you must know that a little blessing coming to us, as a fruit of the Promise, is more worth than a thousand blessings comming to us, only by way of Providence. And therefore David saith, *A little that the righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked,* Psalm 37. 16. And the reason is,

1 Because blessings given by ver-
tue of a Promise, are *signes of Gods spe-
cial love*, and come flowing to us from
the *same love* with which God gives us
Christ, they are the fruit of Covenant-
love.

2 Because wee have them *as* bles-
sings. A man may have a blessing,
and yet not have it *as* a blessing. The
Israelites had Quails sent them imme-
diately from God, which was a bles-
sing in it self, but was not sent to them
as a blessing. For while the meat was ^{Psalm 78,}
in their mowthes, the wrath of God came ^{30, 31}
upon them. The wicked have blessings,

but not *as* blessings, but as the *Cup in Benjamins Sack*, which proved a snare to him, rather than a *mercy*. But the godly have blessings *as* blessings: They have *grace* with them to improve them for *Gods glory*, they have not only the *blessings*, but a *thankful heart* for them, and a *fruitful heart* under them, which is a certaine signe that they have them *as* blessings.

3 Because they are *pledges* to them of *better mercies*, and *beginnings* of *better*. They are not *merces*, but *arrahs*, not their *wages*, but an *earnest* of *Heaven*. Now a *farthing* given as an *earnest* of a thousand a year, is more worth than many pounds given as a reward. A *wicked man* hath outward blessings as his *portion*, his *Heaven*, his *All*; but a *godly man* that hath them by *vertue of a Promise*, hath them as a *pledge of Heaven*, and as a *beginning of eternal mercies*.

5 The Promises are precious, because they produce great and precious effects;

effects. They are not only excellent in themselves, but are also very powerful and operative upon all beleivers. The Promises (as one saith) sealed by the Blood of Christ, ratified by the Oath of God, testified by the Spirit of truth, delivered by the hand of mercy, and received by the hand of Faith, are operative words, and produce rare effects in the soul. They have

1. *A Sanctifying*
2. *A Comforting*

} *Power.*

1. *A soul-sanctifying Power.* Therefore they are said to make us partakers of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. I say, of the Divine Nature; not by the communication of the Divine Essence, but by participation of Divine Graces. Not in a Familistical sense (as if wee were Godded into God, and Christed into Christ) but in a spiritual sense; wee are by the Promises made partakers of the Divine Nature, that is, of the Divine Graces, by which wee are made like to God in holinesse. The Apostle tells

tells us, that they have a power to *cleanse us from all filthinesse, both of flesh and spirit, and to enable us to perfect holiness in his fear,* 1 Cor. 7. 1.

2 *A Comforting Power.* They are able to comfort us in the worst of dayes, and dangers. O how precious is a Promise to a distressed Christian, in the hour of extreimity! The *Sun* is not more comfortable to a man in a *dark dungeon*, or *food* to a man ready to *starve*, or *water* to a man ready to dye for thirst. The Promises of God are *alwayes precious*, but never *more precious* than in times of misery and calamity; and therefore let us in such times especially meditate upon the preciousness of them.

The third
Meditation,
on, medi-
tation on the
freedom
of the Pro-
mises.

3. You must *meditate* upon the *freedom* of the Promises. The Promises are the outward discoveries of Gods eternal love to his people. Now nothing moved God to enter into Covenant with them, and to ingage himself to them by Promise; and there-
by

by to become their debtor, but his free love and mercy; and therefore they are said to be given us of God, 1 Pet. 1. 4. *whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises.* God promiseth in his Word, not only to love us, but to love us freely, Hos. 14. 4. *I will heal their back-sliding, and love them freely.* The reason why God makes us his people, is not from any worth in us, but only because it pleaseth him so to do, 1 Sam. 12. 22. *The Lord will not forsake his people, for his great names sake, because it pleased the Lord to make you his people.* The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great and fundamental Promise, the root of the other Promises, is freely tendered in the Gospel, and freely given, Joh. 3. 16. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.* Revel. 22. 17. *Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

4 You must meditate on the firmness, faithfulness, unchangeableness, and

The fourth Meditation. Meditate on the stability of the Promises.

and immutability of the Promises: they are the Promises of that God, who cannot deny himself. *Promissa hec tunc sunt Domine* (saith Austin) *& quis fallitimet, cum promittit ipsa veritas*; Heaven and earth shall passe away, but one jot or tittle of the Word shall not passe. There is no Promise which God hath made, though never so improbable, and impossible to flesh and bloud, but it shall come to passe in due time, whatsoever hee hath promised in his goodnesse, hee will perform by his power. God is not a man that hee should lye, neither the son of man, that hee should repent: Hath hee said, and shall hee not doe it? or hath hee spoken, and shall hee not make it good? Numb. 23, 19. God hath promised that the same Bodies that dye, shall rise againe at the last day. This is incredible to Natural reason. The Stoicks and Epicures derided it, when it was preached by Paul, Acts 17. 32. But hath God said it, and shall he not doe it? Is the Lords hand shortened? There-

Therefore Christ tells the Sadduces, *Matth. 22. 27.* You erre, not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God. God is omnipotent, and therefore able to doe above what wee can ask or think: God hath promised at the Resurrection, to make our vile bodies like unto the glorious Body of Christ. This is impossible to Natural reason; but mark what the Apostle saith, *Phil. 3. 21.* Who shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious Body, according to the working whereby hee is able even to subdue all things unto himself. God hath promised, that before the end of the World, there shall be a National conversion of the Jewes, that the Kingdomes of the world shall become the Kingdomes of our Lord and Saviour. And that Babylon shall fall. These are the Promises of God, who cannot lye; Faithful is hee, who hath said it, who also will doe it, *1 Thes. 5. 24.* though the things promised seeme impossible to men, yet with God all things are possible.

*Rom. 11
35, 26.*

*Rev. 11. 15
Rev. 12. 2*

Mat. 19. 26

possible : Therefore the Apostle proves the future conversion of the Jewes by an Argument drawn from the power of God, *Rom. 11. 23. God is able to graft them in again.* The like is brought to prove the ruine of Antichrist, *Rev. 18. 8. Her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and shee shall bee utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God, who judgeth her.* The Promises are a firme Foundation to build our Salvation upon : An Anchor, both sure and stedfast. When David was taken by the Philistins, hee was so supported by the Promise of God, that hee did not fear what man could doe against him; therefore hee repeats it three times, *Psal. 56. 3. 10. In God I will praise his Word, in God I will praise his Word, in God I will praise his Word;* (that is, his Word of Promise) I will not fear what flesh can doe unto mee: the Scripture builds all the hope and comfort of a Christian upon the faithfulness

fulness of God, 1 Corinth. 1. 9. God is faithful, by whom, &c. 1 Thes. 5. 23, 24. 1 Corinth. 10. 13. God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, &c. 2 Thes. 3. 3. The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, &c. Heb. 10. 23. for hee is faithful that promised. Memorable is that saying of David, Psalm 138. 2. For thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy name : Which words are to be understood (as David Kimhi, and our English Annotations say) *Hysteron proteron*, that is, thou hast by thy Word, (that is, by performing thy Word and Promises) *Magnified thy name above all things*, or as *Ainsworth* ; Thy word of Promise in Christ, and thy faithfulness in performing of it, doth more exalt thy Name, than any thing by which thou art made known. O then let all the Saints of God, who are heirs of the Promises, meditate frequently upon the preciousness, freeness, firmness, unchangeableness, and immutability of them.

The fifth
meditation,
on the
richness of
the Pro-
mises.

Heb. 6: 17.

Qui habet
habentem
omnia,
habet om-
nia.

5 You must meditate upon the ful-
ness and richness of the Promises. The
Promises are the *Saints Magazine*
and *Spiritual Treasure*; they are called
the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, Ephes.
3. 6, 7. It is one of the greatest titles
belonging to a Saint, to be stiled
an Heir of the Promises. That man
who hath a right to all the Promises in
the Bible, is the richest man in the
world. For *God is his* (and hee that
hath him that hath all things, hath
all things) *Christ is his* (and Christ is
all in all) the *Spirit is his* (and hee
who hath the Spirit, hath all good
things, as appears by comparing *Mat.*
7. 11. with *Luke* 11. 13. In the first
it is said -- *How much more shall your Fa-
ther in Heaven, give good things, &c.*
In the second, *How much more shall
your Heavenly Father give the holy Spi-
rit, &c.*) Grace, and Glory, and all
outward good things are his. It is
said of the *Great Duke of Guise*, that
(though hee was poore, as to his pre-
sent

sent possessions) yet hee was the richest man in *France*, in Bills, Bonds, and Obligations, because hee had ingaged all the *Noble-men* in *France* unto himselfe, by preferring of them. A true and real *Christian* is the richest man in the World in Promises and Obligations, for hee hath the Great God ingaged by promise to bee *his God*, and the *God of his*. As *Charles* the first, commanded his *Herald* in a challenge to *Francis* the first, King of *France*, to proclaim him with all his titles, stiling him *Emperour of Germany, King of Castile, Arragon, Naples, Sicily, &c.* But *Francis* commanded his *Herald* to call him so often *King of France*, as the other had titles by all his Countries; implying, that *France* alone was more worth than all his Countries. So when a wicked man brags of his *Lordships*, and great possessions, when hee boasteth of his thousands a year, a *childe of God* may say, *God is mine, God is mine, &c.* I am

L

richer

richer than all the wicked men in the world.

The sixth
Meditation
on, medi-
tate on
the lati-
tude and
extension
of the
Promises.

6 You must *meditate* on the *latitude* and *extension* of the Promises. The Promises are the *Saints Catholicon*, and *Panacea*. There is no condition a Child of God can bee in, but hee may finde, not onely a Promise, but a suitable and seasonable Promise to comfort him in it. And herein especially consisteth the *spiritual Excellency*, and *heavenly Wisdome* of a *Christian*, not onely to study the Promises in general, but to labour to finde out, and having found out, to meditate upon such kinde of Promises, which are most suitable, and most seasonable to the condition hee is in. As for example.

If thou art poor in estate, meditate on *Psalm 34. 10. Math. 6. 33. Heb. 13. 5.*

If barren, and without children, meditate on *Isa. 56. 5.*

If persecuted for Christs sake, meditate

ditate on *Matth. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13, 14. Psal. 94. 12.*

If sick, and under tormenting pains, meditate on *Psal. 50. 15. Isa. 63. 9. Rom. 8. 28.*

If reproached, slandered, and falsely accused, meditate on *Mat. 10. 25. Mat. 5. 11, 12. Luke 6. 22, 23.*

If Satan tempts thee, and thou art not able to resist him, meditate on *Rom. 16. 20. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Gen. 3. 15. 1 Joh. 3. 8.*

If thy corruptions bee too strong for thee, meditate on *Rom. 6. 14. Micah 7. 19.*

If God hides his face from thee, and thou fittest in darkness, and seeest no light, meditate on *Isa. 50. 10. Isa. 54. 7, 8.*

If ready to faint in waiting upon God, and in expecting the fulfilling of his Promises, meditate on *Isa. 30. 18. Isa. 63. 3. Isa. 40. 28, 29, 30. Mal. 3. 1.*

If ready to dye, and full of fears

L 2

and

and doubts, meditate on 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56 57. Hos. 13. 14. Rev. 14. 13. 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. 2 Cor. 5. 1, 8.

7 You must meditate on the variety of the Promises, and their difference and distinction one from the other. The Promises are like unto the stars in the firmament.

1 For their multitude, they are very many. The Scripture is bespangled with Promises, as the Heavens are with stars. It were happy if the Saints would prove spiritual Astronomers, and make it their work to study the nature of these stars.

2 For their beauty, excellency, and influence. Every star is beautifull in its kinde, and very usefull and advantageous, so are the Promises. And as the stars are most comfortable in the darkness of the night, so are the Promises in the night of trouble and adversity.

3 And especially for their distinction and difference. For one star differeth

The
seventh
Meditati-
on, Medi-
tate on the
variety of
the Pro-
mises.

fereth from another in glory, 1 Cor. 15.41. *There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, another of the Stars;* So do the Promises differ exceedingly one from the other in *beauty and excellency*. Some are *temporal*, some *spiritual*, some of things that are *eternal*. Some are *conditional*, some *absolute*; some are Promises to those that *have grace*; some are Promises of *grace*; some are *general*, others *particular*. Some are *Original*, *Fundamental*, and *Fountain-Promises* (as the promise of Jesus Christ, of God being our God, and of the Holy Ghost.) Others are *derivative*, *depending*, and *rivolet-promises*, (as the promises of all outward comforts here, and of eternal life hereafter.) Now it is our duty to take notice of every *ray of gold*, to meditate upon all the Promises, both *spiritual*, *temporal*, and *eternal*, both *conditional*, and *absolute*, both of *grace*, and to *grace*, both *general*, and *particular*; but especially of the *Original* and *Fun-*

damental Promises, the *Fountain Promises*, from whence all others as so many streams and rivolets, are deduced and derived.

The eight
Meditari-
on, medi-
te on the
fulness of
the
promises.

8 You must meditate on the *usefulness*, and *profitableness* of the Promises. I have already shewed you, that they are the *Conduits of grace*, and *comfort*, that they have a *soul-sanctifying*, and a *soul-comforting-power*. Give mee leave to adde, That the Promises are,

1 The *breathings* of Divine love and affection.

2 The *life* and *soul* of Faith.

3 The *Anchor* of Hope.

4 The *Wings* of Prayer.

5 The *Foundation* of Industry.

6 The *Rays* and *Beams* of the Son of Righteousness, and upon all these accounts are very usefull and advantageous.

the Pro-
mises are
breathings
of Divine
love.

1 They are the *breathings of Divine love and affection*. It is an Argument of Gods wonderful love to his children.

dren, that hee is pleased to enter into a Promise and Covenant to be their God, and to give them Christ, and in Christ all blessings here, and hereafter. Wee read *Gen. 17. 2, 3.* when God told *Abraham* that hee would make a Covenant with him, hee fell on his face as astonished at so great a mercy, and as thankfully acknowledging the goodness of God towards him. The like wee read of *David*. When God by *Nathan* made a promise to him, hee goes into Gods house, and prays, *Who am I, O Lord, and what is my house, that the Lord my God should do this! &c.* The Promises are the Cabinets of the tender bowels of God, they contain the dear and tender love of God towards his elect children, God by promising makes himself a debtor to them. Now that God who is bound to none (no not to the Angels of Heaven) should enter into bonds, and binde himselfe to give grace and glory to his elect children, this is love above expression.

2 Sam 7.
11, 18, 19.

And there is nothing moved God to do this (but as I have said) his free grace and mercy. For though God be now bound out of justice and faithfulness to fulfill his Promises, yet nothing moved him to make these promises, but his love and mercy, as David saith of what God had promised to him, 2 Sam. 7. 21. According to thine own heart (*ex mero motu voluntatis*) and according to thy Word, not for any thing in mee, For what am I, O Lord! &c. Thus you see how the Promises are the breathings of Divine love and affection, and upon this account are very usefull and profitable. For love is loves loadstone; therefore the Apostle saith, Wee love him, because hee loved us first. The sense of Gods love to us, will kindle a love in us to God. Even as the beams of the Sun reflecting upon a Wall, heats those that walk by the Wall. So the Beams of Gods love shining into our souls, warms our hearts with the love of

Magnetis
amor is
amor.
1 Ioh. 4.
19.

of God. The love of God constrains us, as faith Paul, 2 Cor. 5. 14. There is a compulsive and constraining power in love. What did not Jacob do for the love of Rachel? How was Mephibosheth affected with the love of David? 2 Sam. 9. 8. It is our duty to love those that hate us, but not to love those that love us, is more than heathenish and brutish.

2 They are the life and soule of Faith. Faith without a Promise to act upon, is as a body without a soul, as a dead flower which hath no beauty or sweetness in it; But Faith grounded upon the Promises; will enable a Christian to advance in all manner of holiness. What made Abraham forsake his Country, and his Fathers house, and go hee knew not whither? Nothing moved him to this, but because God had promised to make him a great Nation, and hee beleevved it. Of all graces, none so causal of holiness as the grace of Faith: It is a world overcome

The Promises are the life and soul of Faith.

coming, heart-purifying, life-sanctifying, wonder-working graces; and therefore the Promises must needs be very usefull, because they are the life and soul of Faith.

The Promises are the anchor of Hope. Heb. 6. 9.

3 They are the *Anchor of Hope*. Hope is called an *Anchor of the soule*, both sure, and stedfast. But the *Promises* are the *Anchor of Hope*. All Hope of Heaven, which is not founded upon a *Promise*, is *presumption*, and not Hope. *Presumption* is when a man hopes to go to Heaven, upon no ground, or upon an *insufficient ground*. But *true Hope* is a Hope grounded upon a *Scripture-Promise*; And Hope bottomed upon *Divine Promises*, will mightily availe unto purity and holiness. *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* lived as *pilgrims and strangers* upon earth, because they looked and hoped for a *City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*. The Old Testament Saints would not accept deliverance upon *sinfull termes*, because they

Heb. 11.
9, 10.
Heb. 11,

they hoped for a better Resurrection. The Papists and Arminians are much mistaken in teaching, That the assurance of salvation is an enemy to godliness. The Scripture saith the quite contrary, 1 Joh. 3. 3. *Hee that hath this Hope purifieth himselfe, even as hee is pure.* The true Hope of Heaven, will make us live heavenly.

4 They are the *Wings of Prayer*:

Prayer is a Divine Cordial to convey grace from Heaven into our soules. It is a Key to unlock the bowels of mercy, which are in God. The best way to obtain holiness, is upon our knees; the best posture to fight against the Devil, is upon our knees; and therefore Prayer is not put as a part of our spiritual Armour, but added as that which must bee an ingredient in every part, and which will make every part effectual. But now the Promises are the *Wings of Prayer*. Prayer without a Promise, is as a Bird without Wings: And therefore wee read both of *Ja-*

The Promises are the wings of Prayer.

Eph. 6. 18

Gen 31.
13.

606

2 Chron.
30. 8, 9.

Isaiah and *Jehoshaphat*, how they urged God in their prayers with his Promises. And certainly the Prayers of the Saints winged with divine promises, will quickly flye up to Heaven, and draw down grace and comfort into their souls. And upon this account it is that the Promises are so useful to a Christian, because they are so helpful in prayer. When wee pray, we must urge God with his Promises, and say, Lord, Hast thou not said, *Thou wilt circumcise our hearts to love thee, thou wilt subdue our sinnes, thou wilt give the Spirit to those that aske it.* Lord! Thou art faithfull, fulfill therefore thine own promises: And wee must remember this great Truth, That the Promises God makes to us, to mortifie our sins for us, are greater helps against sin, than our promises to God to mortifie sin. Many men in the day of their distresses vow and promise to leave sin, and fight against it in the strength of these promises, and in stead of conquering

sin,

sin, are conquered by sin. But if wee fight against sin in the strength of Christ, and of his promises; if wee urge God in prayer with his owne Word, wee shall at last get victory over it. For hee hath said, *That sin shall not have dominion over us*, Rom. 6.

14. 5 They are the *foundation of Industry*. The promises do not make men *lazy and idle*, as some scandalously say, but they are the ground of all *true labour and industry*, therefore the Apostles perswade us from the consideration of the Promises, unto the study of soul-purification, to have our conversation without covetousness; *to flee from Idleness*, and to separate our selves from *sinful communion*. Divine promises are great encouragements unto spiritual diligence.

Object. *Though conditional Promises be the foundation of industry (because wee cannot have the thing promised, unless wee perform the conditions)*

The Promises are the foundation of Industry.

1 Cor. 7.1

Heb. 12.5.

1 Cor. 10

13, 4

2 Cor. 6.

17, 18.

ons) yet absolute Promises (say some) are foundations of lazineſſe, and therefore they affirm there are no absolute Promiſes in Scripture.

Phil 2:12, 13. *Anſw.* Absolute Promiſes are made foundations of induſtry in Scripture as well as Conditional: The Apoſtle exhorts us to work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling, becauſe it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do, of his owne good pleaſure. And the reaſon is, becauſe God performeth nothing which hee promiſeth, though never ſo abſolutely, but in the diligent and conſcientious uſe of the means on our part. God promiſeth Ezek. 36. 26. to give us a new heart, and a new ſpirit, &c. but then hee adds, verſ. 37. I will yet ſee this, bee inquired of by the houſe of Iſrael.

The Promiſes are the rays and beams of the Son of righteouſneſſe.

6 They are the rays and beams (as one ſaith) of Chriſt the Son of Righteouſneſſe, in whom they are founded and eſtabliſhed. As all the lines in a Circumference, though never

Dr. Reynolds on the sinfulness of sin

so distant, carry a man to one and the same Center. So all the *Promises* carry us to *Christ the Center*. For the *Promises* are not made for any thing in us, nor have they any stability from us, but they are made in, and for *Christ* unto us, unto *Christ* in our behalf, and unto us, so far as we are Members of *Christ*. Now *Jesus Christ* is the ground of all soul-purification, soul-consolation, and soul-salvation; And therefore I may safely conclude, that the promises are most singularly usefull and advantageous. And that it is the duty of all those that desire to live holily and comfortably, to consider and ponder the profitableness and beneficialness of the *Promises*.

9 And lastly, you must meditate on the great necessity that lyeth upon all men to get a Scripture-interest in the *Promises*. This I adde to awaken *Christians* to attend diligently to this Discourse about the *Promises*, and to shew them the necessity of minding and

The ninth Meditation, on, meditate on the necessity of getting an interest in the Promises, of

of studying them. For hee that hath no right to them is in a faithless, hopelesse, comfortlesse, desperate, and damnable condition. All the happiness of a Christian both here and hereafter consisteth especially in his right and title to the promises. The Scripture tells us in expresse words, that hee that is

Eph. 2.12 *a stranger from the Promise, is without Christ, without God, without hope.* Sad is the condition of that man, who hath no interest in God, nor in Christ, and who is without hope. And such is the condition of him who is a stranger to the Promises; for all hope of Heaven, which is not bottomed upon a promise, is presumption, and soul-delusion. All comfort and joy which is not grounded upon a promise, is soul-consumption; and all Faith not anchored upon a Promise, is nothing else but flattery and soul-mockery. Consider this you that are full of joy and comfort, and (as you say) relye upon Christ for salvation; Tell mee, what promise have you to build this

this Faith; this hope, this comfort upon? For there are thousands that *flatter themselves into Hell* by a *false hope of Heaven*; thousands which promise to *themselves* to goe to Heaven, but have no promise for it *from God*. Such were the *five foolish Virgins*; such was the Church of *Laodicea*, such were they; *Matth. 7. 24. Hos. 8. 2, 3. Micha 3. 10, 11.* Remember this, and let it bee daily in your thoughts: you that have not true right to the Promises, your Faith is *faCTION*; your Hope is *presumption*, and your joy is *delusion*. To bee a *stranger from the Promise*, is to be without God, without *Chrift*, and without Hope. So much for the second particular; viz. *Meditate on the Promises.*

The End of the fourth Sermon.

M

RULES

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the cold. It was a sharp contrast to the warm blanket I had been sitting under. I looked up at the sky, which was a pale, hazy blue. The air smelled like a mix of fresh earth and distant fires. I took a deep breath, feeling the cold air fill my lungs. I was alone in the vast, open landscape, and I felt a sense of peace and solitude. The sun was low on the horizon, casting a soft, golden glow over the scene. I walked a few steps, my boots crunching on the dry, cracked earth. The ground was uneven, with small mounds and depressions. In the distance, I could see the faint outlines of hills or mountains, their peaks shrouded in mist. The overall atmosphere was one of quiet mystery and natural beauty. I stood still for a moment, taking in the sights and sounds of this new world. It felt like I had stepped into a storybook, a place where time stood still and the only sounds were the rustle of leaves and the distant call of birds. I smiled to myself, feeling a sense of adventure and wonder. This was my first experience in this strange, new world, and it was everything I needed.

100

REF



RULES

FOR THE
Right Application
of the

Promises

SERMON V.

PSAL. 119. 93.

*Unlesse thy Law had been my delights, I
should then have perished in mine Af-
flictions.*



Ow I come to the third and
last particular. He that would
make the *Promises* as spiritual
bladders to keep him from drowning in

M 2

the

the deep waters of affliction, must not only make a *Catalogue* of them, and *meditate* upon them, but hee must make *Application* of them to his own soul, as belonging to him in particular. Hee must (as it is said of the godly Patriarchs, *Hebrews 11. 13.*) be *persuaded* of them, and *imbrace* them; hee must *hugge* and *kisse* them as his *rich portion*, and *glorious inheritance*. And this is the chief of all: For no man can receive any comfort from a Promise, who is not able to make out his interest in that Promise: As the *life* of a *Sermon* is in the *Application* of it unto our selves, so the *life* of a *Promise* is in the *appropriation* of it. *Quid est Deus, si non est meus?* What am I the better (saith *Origen*) that Christ took upon him the *flesh* of a *Virgin*, if he took not *my flesh*? What was the *great Prince* the better for the miraculous plenty in *Samaria*, when the Prophet told him that hee should *see it with his eyes, but not eat of it?* As

As the man, who when he was ready to be drowned, saw a Rain-bow (which was a signe that the World should never bee again drowned) said, *Quid mihi proderit hac Iris, si ego peream;* What am I the better for this Rain-bow, if I perish? So may I say, what is a man the better for the rich Mine of treasure contained in the Promises, if hee hath no share in it.

There are three sorts of Professors of Religion.

I Some lay claime to the Promises when they have no right to them; such are your presumptuous sinners, who take it for granted, that the Promises belong to them, who presume themselves into Hell by a false hope in the Promises, who make a Feather-bed of the Promises, upon which they sleep securely in sin: As *Thrasylaus* (a mad Athenian) laid claime to every Ship that came to Athens, though hee had right to none: So a presumptuous sinner laies

claime to every Promise, though hee hath right to none; he enlargeth them beyond their bounds, and maketh the conditional Promises to bee absolute, and such as belong only to those that are in Christ, to belong to him, though he be not in Christ. He sucks the poison of sin, and security, out of the sweet flower of the Promises.

2 Some have an *interest* in the Promises, and know their *interest*. These live in Heaven while they are upon earth, these *rejoyce in tribulation*, and are more than Conquerours over the greatest afflictions. These are secure from perishing in the day of distresse. That man, who taking the Bible into his hand, can lay upon right grounds, All the Promises in this Book are my portion, and I have a right and title to them, this man is happy above expression.

3 Some have an *interest* in the Promises, but *doe not know their interest*, and therefore *dare not* (in the hour of trouble)

trouble) apply them for their supportation and consolation. Such are your broken-hearted, wounded, distressed, and deserted Christians. Such can receive no comfort from the Promises in the day of affliction. When they begin to apply them for their support, the Devil suggesteth to them, and their owne doubting hearts tell them, that they mis-apply them, and that they belong not to them. When a godly Minister (whose office is to speak a word in season to those that are weary, Isa. 50. 4.) indeavours by the Application of the Promises to comfort them, their souls refuse to bee comforted, they exclude themselves from having a right to Christ, and his Promises, though Christ would not have them excluded. They groundlessly fear that their names are written in the black Book of reprobation, and that all the Curses of the Law are their portion; hence it is that they live so uncomfortably, and disconsolately in the time

of affliction. Now then for the help of such persons, who have a true title to the Promises, but know it not, who *walk in darknesse, and see no light*, who beleeve they are *Hypocrites*, when they are not, and that they are not in Christ, when they are (that I may be Gods instrument to inable such to make *Application* of the precious promises unto their own souls in particular, in the hour of trouble, for their everlasting supportation and consolation) I shall lay down these ensuing Rules, and Directions.

Rule 1.

The first.
Rule for
the right
Applicati-
on of the
Promises.

1. Whosoever in a *Gospel-sense* doth obey the *commanding word of God*, hath a real interest in the *Promising Word of God*. Though thou canst not perfectly obey the will of God, yet if thou dost truly desire, and industriously endeavour to obey it in all things. If God hath written his Law in thy heart, and given

given thee a Gospel-frame, inclining thee to the obedience of all his Commandements *sincerely*, though not perfectly; this is an *infallible evidence*, that thou hast a right and portion in all the Promises. This is that which God saith, *Exod. 19. 5.* If you will obey my voyce indeed, then yee shall bee a peculiar treasure, &c. If yee will obey my voyce indeed, not only in word, and in shew, but indeed, and in truth. Thus *Jerem. 7. 5, 7.* If yee thorowly amend your wayes, if yee thorowly execute judgement, &c. then will I cause you to dwell in this place, &c. If yee thorowly amend, &c. not only in some things, but in all things; not only outwardly, but inwardly also. This Rule is expressely delivered by the Apostle, *1 Tim. 4. 8.* Godlinesse hath the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come. If thou beest a godly man in a Gospel-sense, that is, one who truly and sincerely indeavoureth to bee godly. If thou makest Gods Will,
thy

thy Rule to live by, and not thine own. Gods glory thy end, and not thy own carnal interest. Gods love thy Principle. If thy Rules, Aimes, and Principles bee godly, all the Promises of this Life, and of the Life to come, belong to thee. It is worth observing: that all the Promises of Life and Salvation are *conditional*. Happiness is entailed upon Holiness, Glory upon Grace. You shall read in Scripture of the *blessings* of the Covenant, and of the *band* of the Covenant, of the *blessings* of the Promises, and of the *condition* of the Promises. If ever you would assure your selves of your interest in the *blessings* of the Covenant, you must try your selves by your sincere performance of the *condition*. Thus Christ is promised to none but such as beleeve; pardon of sin, to none but such as repent; and Heaven, to none but such as persevere in well doing. Tell mee then, Canst thou say as in Gods presence, that thou hast respect to all Gods

Exch. 1. 2.
37.

Gods Commandements (though thou failest in all, yet thou hast respect to all) that thou obeyest God *in deed*, and *in truth*, and that thou sincerely labourst to bee godly? This is a certaine signe, that all the *Promises* are *thy portion*; but you that are ungodly, and doe not thorowly amend your wayes, you that sleight, undervalue, and despise the *commanding Word*, you have no part, no portion in the *promising word*.

But it may bee a distressed Christian (though without just cause) will say that hee is afraid that hee doth not sincerely obey the commanding word, and therefore dares not apply to himself the promising word, wherefore I adde

Rule 2.

1. The more thou art afraid, lest thou shouldest have no right to the Promises, the more right thou hast (in all probability)

The second Rule for the right Application of the Promises.

lity) to them. This I speak only to the distressed Christian; not that I commend his fear: But this I say, The fear which thou art possessed withall is a *probable* signe that thou hast an interest in the Promises. For a *presumptuous* Sinner never doubts of his right to them, but takes it as a Maxim not to be denied, that they belong to him. It is a comfortable saying of Mr. Greenhams, When thou hearest the Promises, and art in a cold sweat, and hast a fear and trembling seizing upon thee, lest they should not belong to thee, doubt not, but that they doe belong to thee.

Mat. 23. 13 For Christ hath said, Come unto me all yee that are weary, and heauie laden, and I will give you rest. And the Prophet Isaiah calls upon those who are of a fearful heart, to be strong, and fear not, and tells us for our comfort, that God will look with an eye of fauour upon him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his words.

Rule 3.

3 The more sensible thou art of thine own unworthiness to lay hold upon the Promises, the more thou art fitted and qualified to lay hold upon them. For the promises are (as I have shewed) the fruit of Free-grace. Nothing moved God to enter into a Covenant with his people, and thereby to become their Debtor, but his free love. Free grace brought Christ down from Heaven, and it is Free Grace must carry us up to Heaven. Christ himself is called, the gift of God, John 4. 10. Moses tells the Israelites, Deut. 7. 7, 8. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor chuse you, because you were more in number than any people, &c. but because the Lord loved you, and because hee would keep the Oath which hee had sworn unto your Fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you, &c. God doth not love us, because

The third Rule for the right Application of the Promises

Sola misericordia
deducit
Deum ad
homines,
& sola misericordia
reducit
homines ad
Deum.

because wee are *worthy of his love*, but because hee loves us, therefore hee makes us *worthy*. Wee must not bring *worthinesse* to Christ, but fetch *worthinesse* from Christ. And therefore if thou beest sensible of thine owne nothingnesse, emptinesse, and unworthinesse, lay hold upon this excellent Promise, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdome of Heaven.* Blessed are those who are sensible of their spiritual wants, for to them belongs the Kingdome of Heaven, as certainly as if they were already in it.

Mat. 5.3

Rule 4.

4 Study thy interest in the *main and fundamental Promise*, and that will help thee to make out thy interest in all the other; The *main and fundamental Promise*, is the *Promise of Christ*. For all Promises, whether Spiritual or Temporal, are made to us, in and through

The fourth
Rule for
the right
Application
of the
Promises.
2 Cor. 1. 20

thorough him, God hath promised, never to leave us, nor forsake us, and that all things shall work together for our good; that is, if wee be in Christ, God hath said, all things are ours, whether Paul, or Apollos, whether life or death, whether things present, or things to come; but it is with this Promise, if wee bee Christs: Whosoever takes any comfort from any Temporal promise, and is not in Christ, doth but delude and cheat himself. This then is thy work; O Christian! study thy interest in Christ, make out that, and make out all. If no interest in Christ, no interest in the Promises; If an interest in Christ, an interest in the Promises; let this then be thy daily business to make it out to thy soul, that Christ is thine.

Quest. How shall I bee able to do this?

Ans. For this purpose you must diligently study three things.

1 The Universality of the Promise of Christ.

2 The

Three things to be studied in order to the making out of our interest in Christ.

2 The *Freenesse* of it.

3 The *condition* upon which hee is tendred,

First, the
universality
of the
Promise of
Christ
Mark 16.
15, 16.

1 The *Universality* of the promise of Christ. Christ Jesus with all his benefits is promised to every one who is willing to lay hold on him, as hee is tendred in the Gospel. The Apostles are commanded to go into all the world, and to preach the Gospel to every creature; hee that beleeveth, and is baptized, shall be saved, &c. If thou hast a heart to beleve, be thy sins never so great, it is for the honour of Jesus Christ to pardon them. As the Sea covers great Rocks, as well as small, so the Mercy of God in Christ will pardon great sins, as well as little. It will cost Christ as little to wash away the guilt of great sins, as of small. Christ is a great Physician. And David prayeth, Pardon my iniquity, for it is great, Psalm 51. 11. Though thy sins be never so bloodily circumstantiated, though never so often reiterated, though thou beest

Magnus
de celo
venit me-
dicus; quia
magnus in
terra ji-
cebat re-
probus
Aug.

beeſt never ſo loathſome ; yet if thou canſt beleeve ; There is a *Fountaine* opened to the houſe of *David* , and to the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* , for ſin , and for uncleauneſſe ; and therefore let no man exclude himſelfe from a right to *Chriſt* , who is willing to take *Chriſt* upon *Chriſts* termes. Hee that excludes himſelfe , offers the greateſt injury imaginable.

First , Unto *Jeſus Chriſt* , for hee makes him a *lyar* ; *Chriſt* hath ſaid , *If any man come to mee , I will in no wiſe caſt him out ;* and hee ſaith , *Chriſt* will *Ioh. 6. 37.* caſt mee out , although I do come to him.

Secondly , Unto his own ſoule. For hee neceſſitates himſelfe unto damnation ; For *Chriſt* hath ſaid expreſſly , *Hee that beleeveth not ſhall bee damned.*

Object. But I am afraid that I am a *Reprobate* , and that *God* hath excluded mee from having any intereſt in *Chriſt*.

N

Ans:

Ans. Who told thee so? It is one great sign thou art not, because the *Devil* would perswade thee that thou art. But howsoever, *Secret things belong to God, but those things which are revealed, to us, and our children.* God hath kept the *black Book of Reprobation secret.* Hee openeth the *whole Book of Election* to some of his children, but hee keeps his *black Book* unrevealed. It is a sin for any man to think himself a *Reprobate* (unless hee can prove that hee hath sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost) for this thought would hinder him from the use of means for his salvation, and cause him to *despair*, which is a sin of the first magnitude; and therefore take heed of *complementing* thy self into *Hell* by a sinfull *modesty*, in refusing to *beleeve in Christ*: Take heed of *dallying* or *delaying* in the great work of *laying hold upon Christ upon Christs termes.* Remember, God *excludes* none from *Christ*, but such as

exclude themselves by unbelief. And remember, *Whosoever beleeueth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Joh. 3. 36.

2. You must study the *Freeneſs* of the Promise of Christ. God promiſeth Jeſus Chriſt freely, *Ho every one that thiſteth, come yee to the waters, and hee that hath no money; Come yee, buy, and eat, yea, come buy VVine and Milke without money, and without price, &c.* Study the freeneſs of the Promise of Chriſt. Ma 11. 12. Chriſt is offered in the Goſpel, *ſine pretio, ſine merito, ſine motivo, without price, without merit, and without any motive* inducing on our parts. Therefore the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* Rev. 22. 17. Let not then thy *undeservedneſs* hinder thee from laying hold upon Chriſt, as thy portion. Say not, I am not worthy that Chriſt ſhould owne mee. Chriſt will owne thee, not becauſe thou art worthy, but becauſe hee delights in mercy, Micah 7. 18. Say not, I am not humbled enough, and therefore I

dare not lay hold upon Christ. For *humiliation* is not required to make *us* precious to Christ, but to make Christ precious to *us*, and if thou beest so far humbled, as to bee willing to take Christ upon Christs termes, thou art humbled enough, unto Divine acceptance, though not unto Divine satisfaction. Every stung Israelite, who was inabled to look up to the *brazen Serpent*, was healed, though hee was not stung to that proportion that another Israelite was.

Study the condition upon which Christ is promised.

3 You must study the condition upon which Christ is promised. It is certain Christ is not tendered absolutely without any condition. Christ is not offered to a *prond sinner*, resolving so to continue, or to a *Drunkard*, resolving to persevere in his drunkenness. Those Texts which declare the *Free-ness* of the offer of Christ, doe also mention a condition to bee performed by those that will have him, *Isa. 55. 1. Revelat. 22. 15.* In both places the con-

condition of *thirsting* is expressed. Let him that is a *thirst* come. Ho every one that *thirsteth*.

Quest. Doth not the mentioning of a condition take away the freeness of the tender of Christ?

Ans. By no means. The reason is, because this very condition is the free gift of God. The Apostle saith, Rom. 4. 16. Therefore it is of Faith, that it might bee by grace. The condition of Faith doth not make the offer of Christ, not to bee of grace, but therefore it is of faith, that it might bee of grace, for as Christ, so also faith is the gift of God. Wee do not Eph. 2. 8. preach conditions unto justification in a Popish sense (as if they merited out of congruity the pardon of sin) or in an Arminian sense (as if wee could do any thing by our free-will (without grace) to dispose our selves unto justification) but in a Scripture sense, wee say, That all those on whom God intends to bestow Christ freely, hee freely openeth their

eyes to see their undone condition out of Christ, hee humbles them under the sense of their sad condition, and out of his free mercy enables them by faith to lay hold upon Christ, and to accept of him upon his own termes; Faith is not the *cause for which*, but the *cause without which*, God will not give us Christ.

Quest. *But what is the condition upon which Christ is promised?*

Ans. There is (if I may so speak) *Conditio prapareans*, & *disponens*, and *conditio applicans*, the condition required to the preparing and disposing us for an interest in Christ, and the condition applying Christ to us, and bringing him into our possession.

1 The condition required to the disposing, preparing, and fitting us for an interest in Christ. And this is the sight of our sins, the sense of them, and a real willingness to part with them. There is no man qualified according to the Gospel, to rest upon Christ for

par-

pardon of his sins, who is not *really* willing to part with them. And no man will bee willing to part with his sins (which hee naturally loves as himselfe) unlesse hee see the *sinfulness* and *cursedness* of them, and feels in some measure the smart of them. The *woman* who had the *bloody issue*, never thought of *coming to Christ*, till all her mony was spent in vaine among other *Physitians*. The *Prodigal childe* would never have returned to his *Father*, had hee not seen himselfe utterly undone by wandring from him.

2 The condition applying Christ to us, and bringing him into our possession. This is *Faith*, which therefore is the proper condition of the Gospel, upon which Christ is tendered. Now this *Faith* is not a bare receiving, and taking of Christ. For there are many who take him, and mistake him. (There is no man but is willing when hee is dying, to take Christ, as the men of the

old world were willing to go into the Ark when the Flood came) but this taking and receiving of Christ (if it be right) hath six Properties.

Right re-
ceiving of
Christ
hath six
Properties

1 It is a receiving of Christ with all his appurtenances, Christ and disgrace, and reproach, and poverty. Christ and his Cross: There are many would be glad of Christ, but they will not take up his Cross. They would take Christ down from the Cross (as Joseph of Arimathea did) and leave the Cross behind them. But hee that takes Christ aright, will be as willing to wear a Crown of thorns, for his sake, as a Crown of gold.

2 It is a receiving of Christ in all his Offices, as our King, Priest, and Prophet. A true Believer is as willing to receive Christ into his soul, as hee is that Christ should receive him into heaven, hee is as willing to have Christ reigne over him, as hee is to reign with Christ in Heaven. Hee desires not only to be saved, but to be healed by Christ.

3 It

3 It is a receiving of Christ into every room of the soul; for Christ will come into every room, or into never a room. A true beleever opens every door unto Christ, hee gives him the lock and key of the whole man, and desires that hee would come and reside in every room.

4 It is a receiving of Christ, and him only. For Christ must rule alone, or not at all. An Hypocrite would compound with Christ, and together with the false Mother, divide the childe; but a true beleever saith with the Prophet, O Lord our God! Other Lords besides thee have had dominion over us; *Isa. 26. 13.* but now by thee onely will wee make mention of thy Name. And with the true Mother hee will give the whole to God.

5 It is a receiving of Christ in health, as well as in sickness; in prosperity; as well as in adversity; in youth, as well as in old age; in life, as well as in death. Most people make use of Christ, meerly as a shelter against a storme for their

their own ends (as the Athenians did of *Themistocles*) and when the storm is over, forsake him. Most people fly to *Christ* in their distress, as *Joab* did to the horns of the *Altar*, and when they can serve the *Devil* no longer, then they begin to think of serving of *God*, but a true beleever will give his best dayes to *God*, as well as his worst, hee desires not onely to dye in *Christ*, but to live for *Christ*, hee receives *Christ* in health,

It is a receiving of *Christ*, not only for an hour, or a day, or a year, but for ever. True Faith marries the soul to *Christ*, never to part. Once a member of *Christ*, for ever a member.

Now there is no childe of *God* of what size soever (though hee bee but as a toe in *Christ*s body) who cannot truly say, that hee is willing to receive *Iesus Christ* with all these Properties, to receive all *Christ*, with all his appurtenances, and to receive him only in every room, in health, and for ever.

ever. And therefore let not the Devil, or thy mis-giving heart, or thy melancholick-phancy, keep thee off from beleeving that *Christ Jesus* is thy portion, and that thou hast an interest in the *main and fundamental Promise*, and by that, in all the other. Do to *Christ*, as the *Shunammite* woman did to the Prophet, *lay fast hold on him*; and suffer not the Devil to cause thee to let go thy hold. Oh that there might be this day a *blessed and happy Marriage* between *Jesus Christ*, and every distressed Christian.

Object. But suppose I am willing to take *Christ* upon *Christ's* termes, can I rest assured that *Christ* will receive me?

Ans. Yes doubtless. For hee hath *Ioh. 6. 37.* said, hee will; and hee is *truth* it self, and cannot lye. Indeed a poor wounded sinner will sometimes confess that hee is willing with all his heart to receive *Christ* upon his own termes; but hee is afraid lest *Christ* should refuse to receive

ceive him. But this is a needless fear. For Christ will in no wise refuse those that come to him. *To as many as receive him, to all these hee will give power to become the Sons of God, even to them that beleeve in his Name. Hee that beleeveth hath everlasting life, and shall never come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.* So much for the fourth Rule.

Ioh. 1. 12.

Ioh. 5. 24.

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If these Rules and Directions already named, will not inable thee to apply the Promises, so as to keep thee from perishing in the day of distress: Let mee adde,

Rule 5.

The fifth
Rule for
the right
Applicati-
on of the
Promises

5 If thou canst not lay hold upon the Promises made to those, who are in the highest form in Christs School; lay hold upon the Promises made to those who are in the lower forms. In Christs School there are divers sorts of Scholars, some are in the high form, some in the middle, some

some in the lowest, some are Babes in Christs School, some are grown Christians, some are as tall Cedars, some are as low shrubs. Now you must know that it is our duty to labour to bee of the highest form. Hee that saith hee hath grace enough, hath grace little enough. Hee that stints himselfe in his endeavours after grace, never had true grace. Wee must labour to bee perfect, as God is perfect. But yet you must also know, that hee that is a real Scholar in Christs School, is in an happy condition, though hee bee not the best scholar. And that it is our duty so to eye the eminent graces, which are in others, as to bee thereby incited to a further progress in grace, but not so as to bee thereby disheartened and discouraged. There are many distressed Christians like to those who gaze so long upon the brightness of the sun, that when they come into their houses, they cannot see at all, they pore so much upon the transcendent excellencies

Qui dixit
sufficit,
deficit.
Non pro-
gredi, est
regredi.

cies which are in their *Brethren*, that
 they are *stark blinde* in their own con-
 cernments, and cannot see any grace in
 themselves, and hereupon are apt to
 conclude, that they are out of Gods
 favour. But this is a *non sequitur*. The
 foot must not say, that it is no part of
 the *body*, because it is not so *eminent* a
 part as the *head* or *heart*. Wee must
 rather say with the Martyr, *Blessed be*
God that I am a member in Christs body,
though but the weakest and lowest. Wee
 must not rest satisfied with being *low*
Christians, but yet wee must not
 therefore say, *Wee are no Christians.*
 And when wee are under great tribu-
 lations and temptations, if wee cannot
 apply to our selves for our comfort
 those Promises which are made to *e-*
minent Saints of the highest form, let
 us apply those which are made unto
true Saints, though to such who are
 the *lowest* of the *lowest form*; and here-
 by wee shall (through Gods blessing)
 finde our soules marveilously supported
 and

and comforted. As for example, Christ hath said, *Blessed are the poor in spirit,* Mat. 5. 3.
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

And therefore though thou art not rich in grace, yet if poor in spirit, thou art blessed. Christ saith, *Blessed are they that mourn,* Mat. 5. 4.
for they shall be comforted. Though thou canst not live without sin, yet if a mourner for thine own, and other mens sins, thou art blessed.

Christ saith, *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness,* Mat. 5. 6.
&c. Though thou findest an exceeding great want of righteousness in thee, yet if thou hungrést and thirstest after it, thou art blessed.

Christ saith, *Come unto mee all ye,* Mat. 11. 28.
that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. This Text is as an Alabaster box full of precious consolation. If thy finnes bee a burden to thee, Christ will give thee rest; if thou carriest them about thee, not as a golden chain about thy neck, but as an iron chain about thy feet; if thou beest

beest heavy laden with them, *Christ* will take them off *thy shoulders*, and put them upon *his*.

Mat. 12.
20.

Christ saith, *That hee will not breake the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoaking flax, till hee send forth judgement un- to victory.* If thou hast grace but as a *smoaking flax*, *Christ* will not quench it, but assist it, till it come to a great flame.

Mat. 9. 13.
13.

Christ saith, *That the whole have no need of the Physitian, but they that are sick.* And that *hee came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* If thou art a *sin-sick sinner*, thy name is in *Christ's Commission*, *hee came to save thee.*

Mat. 18.
31.

Christ saith, *The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.* If thou apprehendest thy self to be in a lost condition, thou art amongst the number of those whom *Christ* came to save.

Rom. 8. 1.

The Apostle saith, *There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, who*

who walke not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Though thou hast much flesh in thee, and art sometimes overtaken with sin, yet if thou dost not walk after the flesh, as a servant after his Master, if thou walkest after the Spirit, there is no condemnation to thee.

The Apostle saith, *If wee confess our sins, God is faithful to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* If wee confess our sins, out of a detestation of sin, with bleeding hearts, and a sincere purpose of forsaking them, God is bound by vertue of his promise to forgive us, else hee were unfaithfull. 1 Ioh 1.9.

The Apostle saith, *That hee that hath begun a good work in us, will perform it untill the day of Iesus Christ:* And therefore if thou hast truth or grace, though but as a grain of Mustard seed, do not doubt, but that God in the diligent use of means, will inable thee to persevere. Phil. 1.6.

O

I might

I might adde, *Nehemiah 1. 11.* where God promiset^h to bee attentive to the prayers of those who desire to fear his Name. And *Isaiah 26. 11. Isa. 26. 3. Isa. 65. 1. Isa. 55. 1. Rev. 22. 15. Joh. 6. 37.* But I forbear.

Rule 6.

The sixth
Rule for
the right
Applicati-
on of the
Promises.

If thou canst not apply to thy selfe for thy comfort in affliction, the *conditional Promises*, lay hold upon the *absolute Promises*. I have formerly told you that there are some *Promises conditional*, others *absolute*, some to *grace*, others of *grace*, some to those that are *godly*, others, to *make us godly*: God hath not onely promised to pardon those that *repent*, but to give *repentance*; not onely to justify those who *beleeve*, but to give us to *beleeve*; not only to give Heaven to those that *love him*, but to give us *grace to love him*; not only to save those that *persevere*, but to inable us to *persevere*: And there-

AA. 9. 31.
Phil. 1. 29.
Deut. 30. 6
Jer. 31. 40.

therefore if thou canst not *lay hold* upon the Promises to *those that are godly*, apply those which are made to *make us godly*. If not those which are made to *those who repent, beleeve and persevere*, apply those wherein God promiseth to *give us to repent, beleeve, and persevere*. If not the conditional, lay hold upon the absolute.

There are these *differences* and *agreements*, between conditional and absolute promises.

1 For Conditional promises.

1 All promises of *life and salvation* are conditional.

2 Conditional promises, are the fruit of *Free-grace*, as well as absolute. It is *Free-grace* which inableth us to performe the conditional, and *Free-grace* which moved God to promise such great mercies upon such conditions.

3 They are the fruit of *Rich-grace*, and *Rare-mercy*, as well as absolute promises.

O 2

4 They

4 They are of great use to quicken a lazy Christian, and to incourage him to diligence; for no man can obtain the blessing promised, but hee that performs the condition enjoyned.

5 They are rare Touchstones to try our interest in the Promises; For hee that neglects to perform the condition, cannot challenge an interest in the blessing promised upon the performing of it.

2 For Absolute Promises.

1 Though promises to grace bee conditional, yet promises of grace are absolute, and are made by God unto Christ in the behalf of his elect children, according to that of David, *Ask of mee, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*

2 There are no Promises so absolute, as to exclude all endeavours on our part. God will do the things promised for us, but by us. Wee work, but

but it is God who worketh all our works in us; and for us.

3 Absolute Promises are foundations of industry, as well as conditional. The truth of this I made out in the former Sermon.

4 Absolute Promises are demonstrative arguments of special election, and of the perseverance of the Saints. There are some peculiar ones to whom God hath promised (in the use of means) absolutely to write his Law in their hearts, to cause them to walk in his wayes, to give them infallibly, and infustrably repentance, faith, and perseverance. The promise of the first grace, and of the crowning grace is absolute. And therefore the Doctrine of Special Election, and of Perseverance must needs bee true.

5 Absolute Promises are mighty helps to wounded consciences; and rare Cordials for fainting and despairing Christians. When thou art in the dark, and seest no light, flye from
O 3 the

the conditional Promises, to the absolute, Iay, Lord, thou hast not onely promised to give pardon to those who *repent*, but thou hast exalted Christ for to give *repentance*. Thou hast not onely promised to *justifie* those who *believe*, but to give grace to *believe*. Lord fulfill thine own promise unto thy servant, &c.

Object. *All my fear is that these absolute Promises, do not belong to mee.*

Ans. Take heed of making desperate conclusions against thy selfe. Say as the King of Nineveh, *Who knoweth but God may turn, and have mercy?* Exclude not thy self; Neither man, nor Angel can say thou art excluded. No man ought to believe himself to bee a Reprobate (as I have shewed) these promises belong to all that can lay hold on them as they are tendered. As the *brazen Serpent* belonged to all those who were able to look upon it; so do these Promises to all that can by
faith

faith look up that they may bee healed. Say as the four Leapers in another case, If I go on in unbeleef, I am certainly damned. And therefore I will venture upon Christ, I will flye to this Ark, and if I perish, I will perish beleeving.

If these Directions will not suffice to comfort thee in the day of adversity, let mee adde,

Rule 7.

All Promises made in Scripture to the Saints in general, are applicable to every Saint in particular. God prom-
 miseth to Solomon, 1 King. 8. 37. 40. And Jehoshaphat applied this to his own particular condition, 2 Chron. 20. 9. God promiseth to the Saints in general, that hee will give them grace and glory, that hee will with-hold no good thing from them, that they shall want nothing that is good, and that all outward blessings shall bee added to them.

The seventh Rule for the right application of the Promises.

Ps. 148. 10
 Psal. 14. 10
 Mat. 6. 33.

Now there is no *Saint*, but hee may as justly lay hold upon those *Promises*, as if his name were named in them. And the reason is, because all the *Promises* do meet in *Christ*, as all *lines* in a *Center*. And every *Saint* hath all *Christ*. And therefore *Promises* made to those that are in *Christ*, belong to all that are in *Christ*.

Rule 8.

The right
Rule for
the right
Application
of the
Promises.
Josh. 1.

Heb. 13. 5.

All *Promises* made to particular *Saints* are applicable to all *Saints* in the same condition. God promiseth to *Joshua*, that hee would never leave him, nor forsake him. This is applied by the *Apostle* for the comfort of every *Saint*. *Christ* tells *Peter*, Luke 22. 32. *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.* This is applicable to every *Saint*: *Christ* prayeth for thee and mee, and therefore hee adds, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* Therefore the *Apostle*

Apostle Paul saith, That God comforted him in his tribulation, that hee might be able to comfort those who are in trouble by the comfort wherewith hee was comforted. And the Apostle James propounds the example of the Prophets in general, and of Job in particular, to perswade unto patience in affliction. And therefore when thou art in any strait, consider what God hath promised unto others, in thy condition, and what God hath done to them, hee will do to thee, for hee is unchangeable. And say not, If I were a Paul, a Peter, or a Job, God would do to mee, as hee did to them; but I am a poor, weak, unworthy creature, not worthy to be named that day in which these are named. But consider, If thou beest a member of Christs body (though but as the Toe) Christ will have a care of thee. If a childe of God (though but weak and sickly) thy heavenly Father will provide for thee. A Father is tender of every

2 Cor. I. 4

James 1.
10, 11,

every childe, and a man of every member of his body, so will God bee of all those who belong to him, though but babes in Christ.

Rule 9.

The Promises of the Gospel are all concatenated. If thou hast a true right to any one Promise to which heaven is annexed, thou hast a right to all the other. As the Commandments of God are chained together (hee that breaks one, breaks all, and hee that sincerely labours to keep one, will labour to keep all, according to that Rule. *Whatsoever is done for God, is done equally.*) And as the Graces of God are linked together, (and therefore heaven is sometimes promised to our grace, because he that hath one saving grace, hath all) so also are the Promises joyned together, hee that hath a right to one, hath a right to all: For they are all but one, and

The ninth
Rule for
the right
applicati-
on of the
Promises.
Rom. 2. 10.

Quinquid
propter
Deum fit,
equaliter
fit.
Mat. 7. 1, 8

*and the same for substance. They are all the fruit of the same free love in God, They are all the branches of the same Covenant of grace. (And therefore if thou hast a right to the Covenant, thou hast a right to all the Promises) they all carry us to Christ, and meet in Christ, and are in him *Yea*, and in him *Amen*; And therefore if thou hast a right to Christ, thou hast a right to all.*

This is a point of singular comfort in the worst of dayes and dangers. For sometimes a child of God under great afflictions, can lay hold upon one promise, and not upon another, and some can apply those which others cannot, and others those which they cannot. Let all such know for their great comfort, That hee that hath right to one branch of the Covenant, hath right to all. Hee that hath let fall a chain of gold, consisting of divers links into the water, if hee can catch hold upon any one of the links, hee will easily get out

out the *whole chain*. The Promises are like to a *golden chain with divers links*, lay hold upon one aright, and this will assure thee of *thy interest in all the rest*.

I have known many (yea, very many) who have dyed with a great deal of comfort from the application of that one Text, *1 Joh. 3. 14.* unto their own condition. *Wee know that wee have passed from death, unto life, because wee love the Brethren.* When all other evidences failed them, and all other Texts of Scripture afforded them no comfort; *here they anchored*, here they found rest for their soules. They blessed God that they could say, that they *loved the Brethren*, and loved them, *not for any outward respects*, but because of the *Image of God in them*, and they loved them when poor, as well as when rich; and the more they *had of God*, the more they *loved them*; and they loved them even when they were reproved by them of
their

their faults. And upon this *one plank* they *swam* safely, and comfortably unto the *haven of eternal happiness*.

Rule 10.

If thy condition bee so sad, and thy melancholy so excessive, that thou canst not lay hold upon any promise, yet notwithstanding look towards it. Say as *Jonah*, when hee was in the *Whales belly*, *Jonah 2. 4.* Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight, yet I will look again toward thy holy Temple. The Temple was a type of *Christ*. Though thou canst not apply *Christ* to thy soul for thy comfort, yet look towards him; and if thou canst not come to him, hee will come to thee; if thou canst not apprehend him, hee will apprehend thee: *Phil. 3. 12.* As the *Loadstone* will draw the *Iron*, though the *Iron* cannot draw the *Loadstone*, so will *Christ* (thy heavenly *Loadstone*) draw thee to the *Promise*, though thou canst not draw thy self

The tenth
Rule for
the right
Application
of the
Promises.

selfe to it. No man can come to mee
(saith Christ) except the Father draw
Ioh. 6. 44. him: Pray therefore with the Church,
Cant. 1. 4. Draw mee, and wee will run
after thee.

Rule 11.

Thereto-
ward
Rule for
the right
Applica-
tion of the
Promises.

Pray unto God to give thee *Spiritual*
eyes, to behold thy *interest* in the *Promises*: For as it is *God* who makes
them, so it is he only who can *irradiate*
them, and open thy eyes to see thy
right in them. It is with *Promises* (as
I have said) as with *Chapters* and *Ser-
mons*. A man may read a *Chapter*, and
hear a *Sermon*, and taste no *sweetness* in
them at one time, and at another time
taste much *sweetness* in them, as God is
pleased to co-operate with the read-
ing of the one, and hearing of the o-
ther. So it is with the *Promises*, and
therefore pray unto God to *lighten*
thine eyes, that thou sleep not the sleep
of death. Pray unto Christ to *awaken*
thine

Psal. 13. 3.
Rev. 3. 18.

thine eyes with his Spiritual eye-salve.
 And to cause thee to hope in his word
 of Promise, according to that excel-
 lent prayer of David, Remember the
 Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou
 hast caused mee to hope. It is God must
 cause us to hope and trust in his Promi-
 ses, or else wee shall never bee able.
 God hath given thee eyes to see thy mi-
 sery; O pray for eyes to see his mercy.
 The Church of Laodicea wanted eyes
 to see her misery. Shee was miserable,
 and naked, and knew it not. Thou hast
 eyes to see thy undone condition out of
 Christ. Pray for eyes to behold the
 riches of mercy that are in Christ, and
 his willingness to receive all that come
 to him.

Rule 12.

Pray unto God, not onely to give
 thee Spiritual eyes to see thy interest in
 the Promises, but a Spiritual hand, to
 enable thee to apply them to thine own

The
 twelfth
 Rule for
 the right
 Application
 on all of
 the Pro-
 mises.

foul

soul in particular. By this spiritual hand, I mean, *A Christ-appropriating Faith*. Justifying Faith is (as it were) the *hand of the soul*, by which wee appropriate Christ, and all the Promises, as belonging to us in particular. Now *Faith is the gift of God*. Pray for the *Spirit of Faith*. And for your encouragement, consider, that the Spirit is called, *The Promise of the Father*, and *that holy Spirit of Promise*: And God hath promised to give the Spirit to those who ask for it. *If yee then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* The office of the holy Spirit is first to seal grace, and then to seal to grace: First, the Spirit *sanctifieth us*, then it *witnesseth to our spirits*, that wee are sanctified. Pray therefore unto God that hee would not only work grace in you, but witness unto the grace which hee hath wrought. Pray for the *sanctifying and sealing*

Eph. 2. 8.

A.C. 1. 4.

Eph. 1. 13.

Luke 11.
33.

Eph. 1. 13

sealing work of the Spirit. That hee would not onely fit you to have an interest in the promises, but assure you of your interest in them.

Rule 13.

Study thy interest in the promises in the *time of health*, and *outward prosperity*; For I find by experience that a childe of God (*under outward affliction*, or *divine desertion*, or *extreme melancholy*) is many times like a man in the dark. A man in the dark cannot (though never so learned) read in a book of the clearest print, or fairest character, hee cannot (though never so active) undertake any thing of weight. No more can a childe of God in the *hour of distress*, read his evidences for heaven, much less study to finde out evidences; hee looks upon all the promises with a *black pair of spectacles*, and wants light to see his interest in them. When *Sion* was

The 13.
Rule for
the right
Application
of the
Promises.

10, 49, 14. in distress, shee said, God had forsaken her, and her Lord had forgotten her. When David was persecuted by Saul, hee said in his haste, All men were liars, even Samuel himselfe, who had told him that God would bestow the Kingdome on him, Hee said in his haste hee was cut off from before Gods eyes; Thus did Heman, Christ himselfe cryed out, when hee was upon the Cross, with a loud voyce, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee? As men in Agues and Feavers, are not fit judges of meates and drinks, (whether they be good or bad) because their pallats are out of taste. So a distressed Christian, (when under extreame melancholy, divine desertion, or some great affliction) is no fit judge, at such a time of his interest in the Promises. And therefore my advice is, Make out thy interest in time of prosperity, and live upon it in time of adversity. Make, and read over thy Evidences for Heaven in
time

Psal. 31.

22.

Psal. 52. 13.

Psal. 51. 6.

27, 18.

time of health, and learn them by heart, that when thou comest into a dark condition, thou mayest neither have them to make, or to read. Do as Tamar did, Gen. 38. 18. 25. When Judah her Father in law, lay with her, shee took as a pledge, his signet, bracelets, and staffe. And afterward when shee was in great distress, and ready to be burnt as a Harlot, shee then brought her staffe, and signet, and bracelets, and said, By the man whose these are, am I with childe, and thereby shee saved her life. So must you do. In time of health study thy interest in the promises, and in time of sickness live upon what thou hast studied, then bring forth thy staffe and bracelets, &c. then produce thy evidences, and make use of them as spiritual butteresses to keep thee from falling into despair. I knew a very godly woman (not unknown to many here) who in her lifetime had taken a great deal of pains to compose, and write down her evi-

Mr. Dig-
gost dwell-
ling with
Mrs. Moor
in Alder-
manbury.

dences for heaven, and who also kept a *Diary of her life*, and wrote down how shee spent every day; when shee lay upon her death-bed, it pleased God to with-draw himself from her for a while, and to let the Devil loose, who tempted her to despair, told her shee was an *Hypocrite*, a *Formalist*, and that shee had no true grace in her. Shee sent for mee, made her bitter complaint to mee, and sadly bewayled her condition. Then shee told mee (which before I knew not) how shee had spent her life, how carefull shee had been in searching her wayes, in observing how shee spent every day, and how exact in collecting *Evidences for Heaven*, the book was sent for, I read a great part of it to her, and tooke much delight and content in what I read. And it pleased God to come to her with comfort in the reading of it. Shee shewed her *Staffe*, and her *Bracelets*, and thereby quenched the fiery darts of the Devil.

Thus

Thus I have in three Sermons taught you how to make use of *Scripture-promises*, as *Conduits of soul-supportation*, and *soul-consolation* in the day of distress. When you hereafter read the *Bible*, remember the *promising-word* (as well as the commanding and threatening word) make a *Catalogue of the Promises*, meditate upon the *preciousness*, *freeness*, *usefulness*, *latitude*, *richness*, and *immutability* of them. They are as certain as God himselfe, they have the *strength of God*, the *comforts of God*, and *assistance of God* in them. Above all, labour to make *application* of them to your own soul. For this purpose, study these *thirteen Rules and Directions*. Pray unto God to give thee *spiritual eyes*, to see thy interest in them, and *spiritual hands* to reach out after them. Pray to God to give thee *spiritual ability*, to *act faith* upon the *promises*, to draw *virtue* from them, as the woman who had the bloody issue, did

from Christ; to suck out all the sweetness that is in them, to hang upon them, as the woman did upon the Prophet, and as a Bee doth upon a flower, and by application of them to thy soul, to live in God, and on God here, till thou comest to enjoy the blessings promised with God for ever in heaven.

There is one Objection behind, which when I have answered, I have done. For a distressed Christian will object, and say,

Object. Though the promises are rare cordials, and shall all of them be certainly fulfilled, yet God is oftentimes long before hee fulfills them, and while God is fulfilling of his promises, I may in the mean time perish in my affliction.

Ans. It cannot be denied, but that
 Gen. 3. 15. God is oftentimes very long in fulfilling
 Lu. 19. 7. his promises. He promised that the seed
 of the woman should bruise the Serpents
 head; but it was Four thousand years be-

before that promise was actually accomplished. Hee promiseth to *avenge his elect of all their enemies, to do it speedily.* And the souls under the Altar cry, *How long Lord, when wilt thou avenge our blood? &c.* But this is not yet fulfilled. Rev. 6. 10.

Nay, I must adde, That God is not onely a long time performing his promises, but sometimes instead of performing them, hee seems to the eye of flesh and blood to walk contrary to them. Sometimes the *Providences of God run cross to his Promises.* God promised to make *David King*; instead of this, hee is persecuted by *Saul*, as a *Partridge upon the mountains*, hee is driven to that extremity that hee begins to doubt of Gods promise, and to say, *That one day hee should dye by the hand of Saul.* God promised to *Joseph*, *That the Sun, Moon, and Stars should worship him,* and that his *sheaf should bee lifted up above the sheaf of his brethren.* But hee findes

findes the quite contrary, his brethren seek to *slay him*, *sell* him into *Egypt*, and there hee is put in prison as one quite forsaken of God. But yet notwithstanding all this, you must know, That though the way of God, in performing his promises, bee very *mysterious* and *secret*, yet hee will at last perform every *iurā*, and tittle of them. Thus *David* was at last made King of *Israel*, and *Joseph* Lord of *Egypt*, and his brethren came all to worship him.

Quest. How must wee carry and behave our selves at such times, when Providences seem to run cross unto Gods Promises?

Ans. At such times there are three things required of us.

Three duties to be practised when providences run cross to promise.

16. 28. 16.

1. It is our duty to wait *patiently*, and *believingly*, till Providences and Promises meet together. Hee that believeth maketh not haite. The Prophet there speaks of a glorious promise, and adds, That a *true Saint* will

wait

wait Gods time; which is the fittest and best time, hee will patiently expect, till God fulfil his promise. Hee will do as the Martyr did, who might have escaped privately out of prison, and was tempted to it by his friends; But answered: *Hee would not go out of prison when his enemies would have him, for they would make him tarry longer than hee should, nor yet when his friends would have him, for they would make him tarry a lesser time than hee should; but hee would come out when God would have him.* Gods time is the best; and they are soon enough delivered, who are delivered in Gods way, and at Gods time. This then is thy great duty (O Christian) to wait patiently, and beleevingly, and not to seek by unlawful waies to bee rid of thy miseries, as *David* did by going to the *Philistines*; and as many in *Queen Maries* daies did, by yeelding to the Popish superstitions. To help you to wait Gods leisure, holding Faith and

1 Sam. 17.
11.

and a good conscience; you have

1 Many rare and precious Promises made to those that wait upon him, which I have formerly named.

2 You have four attributes in God to support you, his *faithfulness*, *almightiness*, *infinite goodness*, and *wisdom*. Hee is *faithful*, and not one tittle of his Word shall fall to the ground; hee is *Almighty*, and able to do whatsoever hee hath promised; hee is *infinitely wise*, to know the best time and season, and *infinitely good* and *loving* to his children, and doth not willingly afflict them, but will make haste to help them.

Lam. 3. 35.

3 It is our duty to live upon Promises, while Providences seem to run cross to Promises. This is the meaning of Hab. 2. 4. *The just shall live by Faith.* They shall live by Faith, when they have nothing else to live on. When sense and reason tell them, they are undone, then shall they live by Faith in the Promises, and not only live patiently

tiently, but comfortably, and joyfully, as the same Prophet, *Hab. 3. 17, 18, 19.* *faith, Although the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit bee in the vine, and the field shall yeeld no meat, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* This life did *Paul* live, when the ship in which he was, was ready to bee drowned, when there was neither *Sun-light*, nor *Star-light*, yet hee was exceedingly chearful, because *God* had promised to preserve him, and those with him. By living this life, *God* is much honoured, and our souls much quieted and refreshed.

Acts 17.
20, 23, 24.

3 It is our duty to continue praying, till providences and promises meet together: For it is prayer, and prayer only, which will at last reconcile *Gods Promises*, and *Gods dispensations*, and cause them to meet, and to kiss one another: For as the Promises are the ground and rule of our prayers; so our prayers are the divine waies and means for the obtain-

obtaining of the Promises. I say, as the Promises are

Psalm.

138. 41.

68. 76.

107. 42.

149.

1 The ground of our prayers. For we cannot pray in Faith, unless we have some promise to bottom our prayers upon; therefore *David* often chargeth God in his prayers with his promise. Hee harps eight times upon the same string in one Psalm, to teach us, that the greatest *Rethorick and Oratory we can use in our prayers, is to urge God with his promise.*

2 They are not onely the ground, but the rule of our prayers; As we must pray for nothing but what God hath promised, so we must regulate our prayers according to Gods Promises. Those thing which hee hath absolutely promised, we must pray for absolutely, and where God hath put conditions, and exceptions, there our prayers must be conditional.

Now as the Promises are the ground and rule of our prayers, so our prayers are divine means and helps for the obtaining

taining of the promises: Though God hath made many glorious and precious promises to his children, yet hee will perform none of them, but to those who by prayer seek them at his hands. When *Nathan* told *David* what great things God had promised to him, hee went into Gods house to pray for them, 2 *Sam.* 7. The Prophet *Isaiah* mentioneth a glorious promise, *Isa.* 43. 25. but hee adds, Put mee in remembrance, vers. 20. Thus *Ezekiel* 36. 37. I will yet for this bee inquired of by the house of Israel, and therefore when you read the Promises of the Bible, remember whatsoever God makes a promise, you must make a prayer, and that prayer will hasten the fulfilling of the promises: You must continue to pray, and faint not; for the vision is but for an *Hab.* 2. 3. appointed time, though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. This did *Daniel* when hee understood the time approached, &c.
hee

hee prayed, *Dan. 9. 2, 3.* Thus did *David*, *Psal. 56. 9. 10, 57. 1, 2.* Thus must you do. These are the three great Duties which the Lord requires of us at all times, but more especially in these our dayes, wherein the Providences of God seem to run quite cross unto his promises. The Lord give us grace to practise them. So much for this Text.

The End of the Fifth Sermon.



A
Brief Repetition of what was
 said of Mrs. *Elizabeth Moore*
 at her Burial.

THough I have finished my
 Text, yet I have another
 Text remaining, of which I
 must speak a few words; and that is,
 The *Party deceased*, at whose Funeral
 wee are here met.

Shee was a *Woman* (I verily be-
 lieve) truly *fearing God*, and yet
 throughout her whole life loaded
 with many and great troubles. God
 picked her out to bee a *pattern* of af-
 flictions, as hee had not long before
 that Reverend and godly Minister,
 Mr. *Jeremiah Whitakers*.

This *Pattern* teacheth us three
 Lessons. 1 That

1 That all things come alike to all in this world, and that no man knoweth love or hatred by any thing that is before him. The best of Saints sometimes are upon the Dungbil, when the vilest of men are upon the Throne. The best of men are afflicted, when the worst of men are in prosperity.

2 That there is not so much evil in affliction, or so much good in prosperity, as the world imagineth. For if there were, God would not bestow so much prosperity upon the wicked, and exercise his dear children with so many afflictions.

3 That there will come a rewarding day, in which it shall certainly bee well with the Righteous. When I see a wicked man prosper, I say, Surely there will come a punishing day, in which the wicked shall bee turned into Hell. When I see a godly man in adversity, I say, Verily there is a reward for the Righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth. Such examples prove

prove that there is another life besides this. And that if the godly had hope onely in this life, they were of all people most miserable.

I will not trouble you with a relation of her *Christian carriage* in the time of her health, because it is sufficiently known to most here present. I shall onely take notice of her great care and diligence in making her *calling and election sure*. Shee had not her *Ark* to build when the *flood* came, nor her *Corn* to get when the *seven years of Famine* came: Shee had laid up a *stock of graces*, and *comforts* against the evill hour, Shee had not her *Evidences for Heaven* to get, at the houre of death. But shee had collected and composed them in the time of her life, and when shee came to dye, shee had neither her *graces*, nor her *comforts*, nor her *Evidences for Heaven* to seek, shee had nothing to do but to dye.

Her sickness was very long, and

Q. very

very painful, concerning which I shall briefly acquaint you with these few particulars.

1. *God* moved the hearts of *very many godly people*, to take compassion of her sad and afflicted condition, and to contribute liberally (she being poor) towards her relief; this *merciful providence* wonderfully comforted her; She saw *Gods love* in it, and was so much affected with it, that she was (for a little while) really and exceedingly afraid (notwithstanding her great torments by reason of a cancer in her breast) lest she should have her heaven in this life, and lest this mercy should bee all her portion. The Lord recompence that labour of love, and that Christian charity a thousand fold into the bosomes of those who manifested so much kindness to her.

2. Her *Patience* was very great. As *God* increased her pains, hee increased her patience, even to the admiration of such of us as were frequent spectators

of it. She was brought to such a sweet frame of spirit, as to be *willing to live under all her torments, as long as God pleased, and to dye whensoever he pleased.*

3 Shee was a woman of a very *fearful nature*, and in the time of her health had many doubts and scruples (notwithstanding all her care forementioned) *about her salvation.* But in her sickness, all her doubts vanished. *God chained up Satan.* The Devil had no power to tempt her, shee felt a great *calmness* in her soul, and had much inward peace, and injoyed more of God, and his *consolations*, in the time of her sickness, than in the time of her health.

4 Shee was very forward in *spreading and diffusing* those *graces* which God had bestowed upon her, and in giving *good counsel* to those who visited her. I have heard her often, and often perswading her friends to *prize health*, and to *improve* it for the good of their souls, to *lay up* against an *evil day*,

day, and to stock themselves with grace before sickness come. Shee would frequently say, *O the benefit of health! O prize health! praise God for health, and improve health for your eternal good.*

5. Shee was very well versed in the Scriptures. The Law of God was her delight; and this kept her from perishing in her affliction. Shee was continually fetching cordials out of the Word, to comfort her under her great pains, and to preserve her from fainting. The twelfth Chapter of the Hebrews was a precious cordial to her, so was the eight of the Romans, and the 2 of the Corinthians the 4. Chapter and the 17, 18. verses. *For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*

While wee look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which
are

are not seen, are eternal.

1 Cor. 15, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal, must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

The sting of death is sinne, and the strength of sin is the Law.

But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Phil. 3, 21. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby hee is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

A little before her death shee said, In the Lord Jehovab there is righteousness and strength; righteousness for

justification and strength for supportation. Shee said, that the Word of God was the best cordial in the world: And that one minutes being in Heaven, would make amends for all her pain and misery.

6 And lastly, I cannot but take special notice of the happy close of her life, and of the blessed end shee made. It is said of Job, James 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, &c.* This our Christian Sister did in a great measure, partake both of *Jobs* pains, and *Jobs* patience, and made as happy an end, as hee did, though in another kinde. In the morning of that day in which shee dyed, shee fell into a slumber, in which shee heard (as shee thought) one saying to her, *This day thou shalt bee with mee in Paradise.* Immediately shee awaked full of joy, and though hardly able to speak, yet shee uttered it to those who stood by, and was much comforted with it.

Now

Now though I am far from putting any confidence in *dreams*, and doubt not that a man may dream hee shall go to Heaven, and yet bee cast into Hell. Though I do not think that comfortable dreams are sufficient evidences of salvation. (Nay, when they are brought as proofs of erroneous opinions, I account them *Diabolical delusions*; and when wicked men have them, *pleasant presumptions*.) Yet notwithstanding when a woman who hath spent many years in the *service of God*, and is visited by God for above a year, with great and most grievous pains, shall at the close of her life, (when shee is upon the very brink of eternity) have such a *sweet, refreshing, and heart-cheering impression upon her spirit*; when *heart fails, and flesh fails*: When shee can hardly speak to express the greatness of her joy, then to hear a voice (as it were) saying to her, *This day thou shalt be with mee in Paradise*. This (in all probability) was the voice of

Q 4

God,

God, and not of man. This was the
 Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our
 eyes. I forbear saying any more. Shee
 is gone from a Prison to a Palace, from
 a Purgatory to a Paradise. Shee is at
 rest with God, where all tears are wiped
 away from her eyes: The Lord fit us
 by his grace to follow her in due time
 into the Kingdome of glory. Amen.

Mrs.



Mrs. *Elizabeth Moores*
EVIDENCES

FOR

HEAVEN:

Collected by her self in the
 time of her health, in such
 manner and method, as they
 are here presented to
 Publick view.

I Her *Design* in this *Collection*.

IN the Examination of my
 self, I finde that my *Aims*
 and *Ends*, why I desire
 to gather together, and
 clear up my *Evidences*
 for heaven (if my deceitful heart doth
 not

not deceive mee) are these follow-
ing.

The first
Design.

1 **T**hat hereby (as it means) I may
bee enabled to glorifie God in
the great work of believing, that here-
by (with Gods blessing) the dimme
eye of my Faith may more clearly see
the Lord Jesus Christ to bee a *Peace-
maker*, and *Reconciler*, and *Surety*, for
me, even for *me*, who am by nature
a fire-brand of Hell. The time was,
I am sure, when I was the *Devils*
picture, and had the *black brand* of *Re-
probation* upon mee, and therefore it
doth neerly concern mee to search
and trye what *Evidences* I have to
prove that God fetching Arguments
out of his own bowels, and the riches of
his free grace, hath redeemed mee out
of this lost estate.

The se-
cond De-
sign.

2 **M**y Aime is to strengthen that
longed for grace of *Assurance*.
A grace, which though it bee not of
ab-

absolute necessity for the *being* and *salvation*, yet it is of absolute necessity for the *well being* and *consolation* of a Christian; without this grace I can neither *live* nor *dye* comfortably; and I have been often exhorted by Gods faithful *Ambassadors*, to gather together my Scripture *Evidences*, and to have the approbation of some godly and experienced Minister or Christian; and this by Gods blessing may bee a means to strengthen Assurance: Yea, I finde in Scripture, that the Lord saith, that the Priests lips shall preserve knowledge, and thou shalt seek the Law at his mouth, for hee is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.

Mal. 3. 2.

3 MY Aime is to obey God in his Word, who hath commanded mee by his Apostle, to work out my own salvation with fear and trembling; and to give all diligence to make my calling and election sure: And I am exhorted to examine my self, and prove my self,

The third Design.

Phil. 2. 12.

1 Peter 1. 10.

1 Cor. 13.

whe-

whether I bee in the faith or no, Know yet
not (saith the Apostle) that Christ is in
you, except you bee reprobates: And
if any man bee in Christ, hee is a new
Creature; old things are passed away, and
all things are become new.

Now then to prove whether I bee
indeed and in truth born again, is my
desire at this time, the Lord help mee,
and give mee a sincere and upright
heart, and guide mee herein by his ho-
ly Spirit, for the honour of his holy
Name.

2 A brief Collection of her Evi-
dences for Heaven.

First
Evid

Blessed bee God, who hath through
his free mercy begotten mee to a hope,
that I am regenerated and born from a-
bove, and converted unto God.

Reason, Because the Lord hath gone
the same usual way with mee, as with
those hee pleaseth to convert to him-
self;

self; and this I shall make to appear in five or six particulars.

1 The Lord by his Spirit accompanying the preaching of his Word, caused the scales to fall from my eyes, and opened them, and set up a clear light in my understanding, and made mee to see *sin*, to bee *exceeding sinful*, out of measure sinful, and to look on it as the loathsomest thing in the world, and on my self as a loathsome creature in Gods sight, and in my own sight, by reason of the Leprosie of *sin*, where-with I was over-run.

2 The Lord brought mee to see the *miserie* that I was in, by reason of my sins. I thought I was utterly forsaken of God, and I thought that God would never accept of such a wretch as I saw my self to bee. I could not think otherwise, but that hell was my portion, and that I, by reason of my sins must go thither, expecting every day when the Lord would glorifie himself in my damnation. I saw my self

self in more misery, because of my sins than I could then, or now expresse to any body. I looked upon God as a *consuming fire*, and on my self as *straw*, ready to bee consumed by him, &c.

3 The Lord brought mee to a *spiritual astonishment*, that I cried out, *What shall I do to bee saved!* and said with *Paul*, *Lord! what wouldest thou have mee to do?* Do but make known to thy poor creature what thy will is, and I thought I could do any thing, or suffer any thing for the Lord. But since I have had some more knowledge of the holy Will of God, woe is mee! what a barren and unfruitful heart have I! a heart that can neither do, nor suffer any thing for the Lord, as I ought to do: But this I can say, that the *astonishment* I was in by the sight of my sins, and the *misery* I was plunged into, put mee on the *performances of holy duties*, especially *prayer*.

4 The Lord took mee off my own *bottoms*,

bottomed, off my own *righteousness*, and made mee to see that that was but a *sandy foundation*, and would not hold out. I was not taken off from the *performance* of holy duties; no, I thought with my self that I am commanded by God to perform holy duties, which is the way and means whereby wee may meet with God (For hee is ordinarily to bee enjoyed no where but in his own ordinances) but the Lord took mee off from *resting* and *trusting* in Ordinances. And as hee made mee to see that without the practise of them hee would not accept of mee; so also hee made mee to know that it was not for holy duties, for which I was accepted. The sins that cleave to my best performances, are enough for which the Lord may justly condemn mee, if I had no other sins.

5 The Lord brought mee to see a *Superlative beauty and excellency* in the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and my soul was deeply in love with him, even with
whole

whole Christ in all his Offices, and (if I know any thing at all of my owne heart) I desired Christ as much to bee my King and Prophet, to teach, and guide mee, and subdue mee to himself, and rule over mee, as to bee my High-Priest, to make Attonement by offering up of himself for mee, and washing mee in his blood, by which I must bee justified.

6 The Lord brought mee to see a soul-satisfaction in the Lord Jesus Christ alone; and I think I should bee as fully satisfied with Christ alone, as my heart can desire. If I know my heart, it panteth after Christ, and Christ alone: *None but Christ, none but Christ.* The whole world in comparison or competition with Christ, is nothing to mee. But in him I see full contentment. To see and know my interest in him and to injoy communion with him, is that, which if the Lord would bestow upon mee, I should with Jacob say, *It is enough*; and with old

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Simeon) Now let thy servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen thy salvation.

Now I desire to set down some other Scripture Evidences, that I finde upon search and examination of my heart, by laying it to the Rule; The Word of God.

My Second Scripture Evidence is Second Evidence.
 taken from *Mark. 2.17.* Where Christ saith, *They that are whole have no need of the Physitian, but they that are sick, and hee came not to call the Righteous, but sinners to repentance.* Now through Gods mercy I can say, that I am a *sin-sick-sinner* (the Lord make mee more sick) I am not *righteous* in mine own eyes, but a sinner, and see my self undone for ever, without the righteousness of Christ bee imputed to mee, and therefore I hope I am amongst the number of those whom Christ was commissioned by his Father to come to save.

R

From

Third
Evidence.

From *Matth. 11. 28, 29.* I am *weary* and *heavy laden*, now Christ hath promised to *give ease* to such. And I am willing to *take his yoke upon mee*, and would fain learn of him the lesson of *meekness* and *lowliness*, and therefore am invited to *come unto him*.

Fourth
Evidence.

I can say with *David*, that my sins are a *heavy burden* to mee, they are too *heavy for mee*, *Psal. 38. 4.* and I can say that I mourn, because I cannot mourn no more for my sins; now Christ saith, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*, *Mat. 5. 4.*

Fifth
Evidence.

From *Matth. 5. 3.* I think (if my heart do not deceive mee) I am *poor in spirit*; now theirs is the *Kingdom of Heaven*, saith Christ.

Sixth
Evidence.

From *Matth. 12. 20.* I am a *bruised reed*, and *smoking flax*, and therefore Christ hath promised, hee will not *break* such a reed, nor *quench* the *smoak*

Imoak of grace; if it bee true grace, but hee will increase it more and more (as hee saith) *Untill judgement breake forth into victory*: And hee came to set at liberty them that are bruised; *Luke 4. 18.* Therefore I hope I am such a one as hee came to binde up, and set at liberty; Yea, and that hee was anointed and sent by his Father to mee, and such as I am, *Isa. 61. 1.*

From *1 Tim. 1. 15.* *This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation, (saith Paul) That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners:* And so say I too; It is worthy all acceptation, that Christ should come from the bosome of his Father, who was infinitely glorious and happy, that hee should come into the world to save mee, mee a sinner, mee the chiefe of sinners, mee, that if saved, I do verily beleeve; there is none in heaven, nor any that ever shall come thither, that hath or

Seventh
Evidence:

will have the cause to magnifie and adore free grace, as I shall have. And herein doth God commend his love towards mee. For if when wee were enemies, wee were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, wee shall bee saved by his life, Rom. 5. 10.

Eighth
Evidence.

I can say with Paul, that I delight in the Law of God, after the inward man, and I am grieved that I cannot keep it. I finde that spiritual war in mee, between flesh and spirit, which Paul complaineth of, and I can say, that Paul doth confess over my heart in his confessions, Rom. 7. And I can go along with him there, from verse 9. to the end of the chapter; and from hence I gather, that there is some spiritual life in my soul, and an endeavour to walk after the spirit, and therefore I hope and desire to conclude with him, that there shall bee no condemnation to mee, but that the Law of the spi-

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rit of life in Christ Jesus shall make mee
 free from the law of sin, and death. I Rom. 8.
 finde an earnest desire wrought in my^{1, 2}
 soul, to bee made like unto Jesus
 Christ, and that it may bee my *meat*
 and *drink* to do and suffer his will, as
 hee would have mee.

I can say, that the Lord hath in^{Ninth Evidence.}
 some measure put his fear into my
 heart, that I fear to offend him out of
 love to him, and I love to fear him.

I can say with the Church to Christ, ^{Tenth E-}
Cant. 1. 7. O thou whom my soul lov- ^{vidence.}
eth! (and if I know any thing at all of
 mine own heart) Christ is altogether
 lovely, and most desirable to my soul.

I think I can truly say with David,
 that *I have none in Heaven but thee,*
and there is nothing on earth that I de-
sire besides thee, in comparison of thee,
 in competition with thee. Though all
 that is dearest to mee in the world
 should forsake mee, yet if God whom

I have chosen for my portion will not forsake mee, I have enough. It is my desire and endeavour more and more to account all things but loss and dung, that I may win Christ. I can with Peter make my appeal to him, and say, Lord, thou who knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee, and that it is the desire of my soul to love thee more, and to love thee for thy self, because thou art holy, and good, and gracious, and the chiefest amongst ten thousand; Yea God in Christ alone, is worthy to be beloved, and it is my highest priviledge that hee will give mee leave to love him, who only can satisfie my soul, and redeem it from death eternal, who hath justified mee by his blood, and sanctified mee by his Spirit, whom therefore I love with all my heart, and all my soul, and all my might, and all my strength. Finding therefore, that God hath drawn out my heart to love him, and make choice of him alone, I from hence gather
and

and ground my hope, that God loveth mee, according to that Scripture, *1 Joh. 4. 19. Wee love him, because hee first loved us.*

I finde my heart much inflamed with love to all the children of God, Eleventh Evidence.
because they are Gods children, and the more I see, or finde, or hear of God in them, the more I finde my heart cleaving to them, and I thinke I can truly say with *David*, That my *delight is in the Saints*; and those that excel in *grace*; not because they are friends to mee, or I have relation to them in regard of outward obligations, but because they bear the Image of God upon them, and manifest it in their holy conversation. I love them, whether rich, or poor. And though I did never know some of them, but onely hear of their holiness, and piety, yet I could not but exceedingly love such. Therefore I hope that *I am passed from death to life, because I love the Brethren, 1 Joh. 3. 14.*

Twelfth
Evidence.

1 Joh 3.3

Psal. 119.

5.7.32,34

I do not only love God, and the children of God, but I labour to keep his Commandements, and they are not grievous to mee. But I pray with David, *O that my waies were directed to keep thy statutes!* Lord enlarge my heart, and I will run the waies of thy Commandements: Give mee understanding, and I shall keep thy Law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart; for therein do I delight,

Thirteenth E-
vidence.

I finde I am one that is very thirsty after Jesus Christ, and the grace of Christ, and I thirst to have his image more and more stamped upon mee; and I would fain bee assured by Gods Spirit, that I am *transplanted* into Christ, and therefore I long, and in-
deavour after a true and lively Faith, because that Grace is a *soul-transplanting and uniting grace*. Now Christ hath promised to *satisfie* the thirsty, Matth. 5.6. and such Christ hath earnestly invited to come, though they have nothing

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nothing to bring but what may make
against themselves, yet to come *emp-
ty*, and hee hath promised to *fill them*.
Isa. 55. 1, 2.

I am willing to *confess*, and with all my heart to *forsake* all my sins. I am willing to give glory to God in taking shame unto my self. I acknowledge my self a guilty *walefactor*, and judge my self worthy of the just condemnation of the righteous Judge of all the earth. And I do not only confess my sins, but with all my heart I desire to forsake them, and to turn to the Lord: Now hee hath said, hee *will have mercy on such, and will abundantly pardon them. For his thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his waies, as our waies*, Isa. 55. 7, 8. It is my constant indeavour to *dye to sin*, to *live to newness of life*. And this is my comfort and hope, that hee who hath begun a good work in mee, will *perfect it*. For it is hee that *worketh all our*

Four-
teenth E-
vidence.

our works in us, and for us, Isa. 26. 12,
 and hee that hath wrought in mee to
will, to do that which is pleasing in his
sight, will work in mee to do also,
 and that of his good pleasure, *Phil.*
2. 13.

Fifteenth
Evidence.

I hope I am one whom God hath
 taken into *Covenant* with himself, be-
 cause hee hath bestowed upon mee
 the *fruits* of the Covenant, because
 hee hath *circumcised my heart* to love
 him, and hath put his *fear into mee*,
 and hath wrought an universal change
 in mee; and hath given mee a *new*
heart, and a *new spirit*; yea his own
 spirit which hee hath put within mee,
 even the *Spirit of Truth*, which will
guide mee into all Truth. It is his own
 promise to *give his holy Spirit to them*
that aske it of him (as I have done often)
Luke 11. 13. and I hope that God
 will make it in his due time, a *witnes-*
sing and a *comforting Spirit*. I will
 wait upon him for the accomplish-
 ment

ment of all his promises, both of grace, and *to* grace. Hee hath said, hee will bee a *Sun* and a *Shield*, he will give *grace and glory*, and no good thing will bee with-hold from them that walke uprightly. And hee hath promised to subdue our sins for us; and hath said, That sin shall not have Dominion over us, Rom. 6. 14. That hee will bee our God, and wee shall bee his children; and hee will save us from all our uncleanneses. I hope I have a share in this blessed Covenant of Free Grace.

As for my *Affliction* that lyeth upon mee (though it bee in it self very heavy) I much more desire the *sanctification* of it, than the *removal*. I earnestly labour to learn all those lessons which God teacheth mee by *Affliction*. I know I should not bee scourged, nor bee in tribulation, but that I have need of it; it is for my profit to make mee partaker of his holiness. Afflictions are an evidence of Sonship,

Sixteenth
Evidence.

Rom. 8.
28

ship, Heb. 11. 6, 7, 8. God hath promised that *all things shall work together for good to them that love and fear him.* And I have had much experience of his *faithfulness*, who hath not suffered mee to bee tempted above what hee hath inabled mee to bear; therefore I will *bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* Hee hath chastized mee less than mine iniquities deserve. Hee *chastizeth mee here, that hee may not condemn mee hereafter.*

Seventeenth E-
vidence.
AQ. 16. 31
1 Joh. 3.
23

Faith is the condition of salvation. *Beleeve in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt bee saved. And this is his Commandement, that wee should beleeve in his Son Jesus Christ:* Now I find nothing so hard to mee as to beleeve aright: to cast away all my own *Righteousness* as dung, in point of justification, and to cast away all my *unrighteousness*, so as that bee no bair to mee, and to *role, and cast, and venter* my immortal soul upon

upon Jesus Christ and his Righteousness, for life and salvation by him alone, and to see my self compleat in him; this is supernatural. Yet I must and will give glory to God, and say, *Lord I beleeve, help thou my unbelief.* And by this I prove that this precious grace of faith is wrought in mee, because Jesus Christ is to mee very precious: and I finde in the Word, *that to them that beleeve hee is precious:* and I am willing to take Christ upon his own termes, as hee is tendred in the Gospel, and am willing to give up my self soul and body wholly to him; and my love to God, and to the children of God, is a fruit of my Faith, as also my desire to be made like unto him: For *hee that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as hee is pure,* 1 John 3. 3. And I trust that I am kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *I know whom I have beleeved, and I am perswaded that hee is able*

able and willing to keep that which I have committed unto him, which is my immortal soul.

2 Tim. I.
12.

Thus I have according to the Apostles exhortation endeavoured to give a reason of the hope that is in mee. What have I but what I have received? The desire of my soul is, that God may have all the glory. And if I bee deceived, the Lord for Christs sake undeceive mee, and grant that if I have not true grace, I may not think I have, and so bee in a *Fools Paradise*. And the Lord that is my *heart-maker*, bee my *heart-searcher*, and my *heart-discoverer*, and my *heart-reformer*. Amen.

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